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Backstreets

THE BOSS MAGAZINE

#67 SUMMER 2000

THE
E STREET
TRAIN
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INTO
NYC

END OF THE LINE

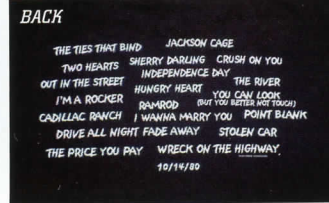


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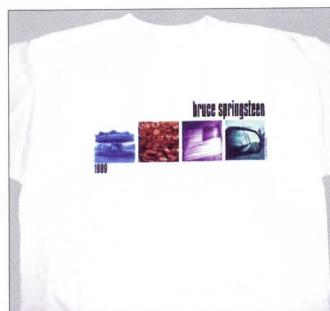
The latest merchandise at Backstreet Records from the E Street Band rededication tour! Everything here is officially licensed, 100% pure Springsteen stuff. Quantities are limited, so we're not offering these items on our website, but only to *Backstreets* readers and existing Backstreet Records customers. Look for more tour items at www.backstreets.com. All shirts are pre-shrunk 100% cotton, and all are available in Large and Extra-Large.



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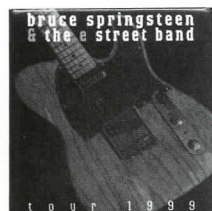
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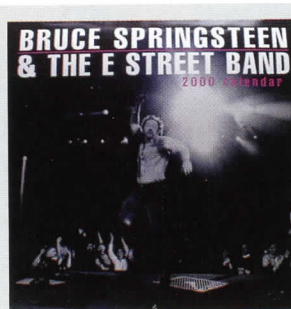
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GUITAR BUTTON A 2" square pin of Bruce's Fender, with "Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band Tour 1999." **\$3**



BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND 2000 CALENDAR The official calendar sold on tour, designed by Springsteen's art team. With beautiful shots by Annie Leibovitz, Eric Meola, David Gahr and others. Unlike the 2000 calendar from the UK (now sold out), this one has a space to write in for each day, with the hubcap tour image screened in the background. The photos themselves go in chronological order from the beginning of Bruce's career, with the last few months of the year featuring shots from the E Street reunion tour. So it's not only a great calendar for this year, it's a great tour souvenir. **\$12**



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Blinded by the light.

Backstreets

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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

7/1/00 New York, NY
Rosie L. Darling Photo

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

8/21/99 Boston, MA
Steven Marlin Photo

LETTERS

KEEP IT ROCKING

Dear Editor:

I've often thought over the past couple of years that rock 'n' roll was dead. And reading your interview with Steve Van Zandt in issue #66, his comments confirmed my fear. But I truly believe that "American Skin (41 Shots)" will not only make America aware of a horrible incident, it will give rock a shot in the arm. When was the last time a rock song created a nationwide commotion? And when was the last time an emotional rock song was written? It's good to have Bruce and rock music back in the spotlight.

Seth Brahler
Milford, NJ

ANOTHER MAN'S SHOES

Dear Editor:

During the dust-up surrounding "American Skin," the New York newspapers printed many letters that accused Bruce of being an opportunist bent on reviving a "flagging" career and a rich man who knew nothing of the daily struggles of police offi-

cers. Ordinarily, the absurdity of the first charge would not even register with me, but I was disturbed at how many people seem to mistrust or misunderstand the role of an artist as social observer in our society. Has money even robbed us of that? To those who say, "Springsteen doesn't know what it's like to be a cop, just this thought: I listened to "Stolen Car" (the *Tracks* version) early this morning in a very quiet house. Springsteen may not know what it's like to be a cop but none of us knows what it's like to be Springsteen.

Larry Thompson
via e-mail

LOST IN THE STARS

Dear Editor:

I'm into my withdrawal period now, after six concerts on the current tour. They were all great; three hours passing in an instant. Now I have that queasy feeling in my stomach, wondering when I'll get to see him live again. So, I consulted the planets, and here's what it looks like. By the end of May, Saturn will be moving into Bruce's twelfth house of seclusion for a two years and change. This looks to be a time of writing and little, if any, performing. A quiet

period. In July, 2002, Saturn crosses his ascendant, which marks a new beginning in life, a major transition. It's safe to predict that he will come out with a new album at that time, with a subsequent tour to follow. A big tour.

The last time Saturn crossed Bruce's ascendant was in June, 1973, when *Greetings From Asbury Park* was released, so the upcoming Saturn cycle should mark the beginning of a whole new Springsteen era. That makes me feel better.

Linda Segall-Anable
Valley Glen, CA

ACT REAL COOL

Dear Editor:

I thought you might find this interesting. Many of us who are 50 or so have teenagers who have grown up listening to Bruce. My kids actually believed that if you drove to the Jersey Shore it was the law to listen to Bruce on the radio. A lot of these kids really like Bruce but are ashamed to admit it, as it is not cool on college campuses to listen to Bruce—the Dave Matthews Band is okay, of course.

My daughter is in school in Amherst, and on May 6 she

called me to see if I could get her and her roommates tickets for the show on either the 7th or 8th in Hartford. They were all into Bruce but never mentioned it to each other—they lived together for a whole year and never played Bruce for fear of being uncool. When it finally came out that they were all into Bruce, they were all hyped to go to the show together. I could not get them tickets for Hartford but, I will be taking 6 college kids to see Bruce at Madison Square Garden. And the cool part is that they *want* to go, not just to make the old man happy.

Dennis Meltzer
Long Island, NY

ON THE BOARDWALK

Dear Editor:

In his first ever performance in "Sin City," rock superstar Bruce Springsteen fittingly opened up his concert at the MGM Garden with "Viva Las Vegas." For years, Springsteen has avoided playing casino venues. But now it's apparent he's gotten over this unexplainable aversion. What could be better than Bruce singing "Viva Las Vegas" in a Nevada casino? Bruce opening up a concert with his very own epic ballad, "Atlantic City," at Trump Plaza in his home state of New Jersey.

Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band wrapping up their reunion tour with a ten-night stand on the boardwalk at the freshly renovated Atlantic City Convention Center would easily be the greatest event in the history of both the gaming and show business. And now that Springsteen's aversion to casinos has dissipated, the final obstacle for this dream mega-event has been laid to rest. There are no more excuses. Are you listening, Donald Trump?

Eugene R. Dunn
Manorville, NY

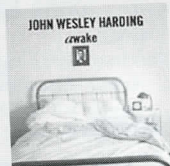
I'VE SEEN ENOUGH

Dear Editor:

Thanks for the invitation to renew my subscription, but I'm afraid I won't be doing so. I have enjoyed the magazine and wish you all the best, but this is where we part company.

I'm so glad I got to see Springsteen in 1981 at two magic

THE BACKSTREET RECORDS CD RACK



JOHN WESLEY HARDING: AWAKE

A new reissue from Appleseed includes two *River* songs as bonus tracks: a cover of "Jackson Cage," plus his live acoustic duet of "Wreck on the Highway," with

Bruce Springsteen (from 6/18/94), officially available for the first time! Incredible.....\$14



BORN AGAIN SAVAGE

Steve's rocking new album, his fifth solo record and first in a decade, is a tribute to '60s hard rock in sound, with Steve's unique twist. Released on his own label, Renegade Nation, and not to be missed.....\$17

CLARENCE CLEMONS: RESCUE/HERO

The Big Man's first two solo albums, which have been out of print, now in their entirety on *one* CD. This import CD contains both albums, in order, with the Springsteen-penned "Savin' Up," and CC's duet with Jackson Browne on "You're a Friend of Mine.".....\$22

JOE D'URSO & STONE CARAVAN: ROCK AND ROLL STATION

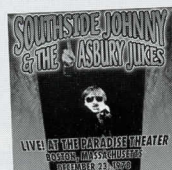
The new CD from Joe D'Urso & Stone Caravan, featuring "Rock and Roll Call" (as heard on Vin Scelsa's *Idiot's Delight*). If you've enjoyed their live shows, be sure to check out the new album.....\$15



'TIL WE OUTNUMBER 'EM

From the 1996 Woody Guthrie Tribute at Severance Hall in Cleveland, Captures Bruce's performances of "Riding in My Car" and "Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportee)" on his own, and "Hard Travelin' Hootenany" and

"Til We Outnumber 'Em (This Land is Your Land)" with the All Severance Hall Cast. Also includes Billy Bragg, DiFranco, Indigo Girls, Pete Seeger, more. 19 tracks in all.....\$16



SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY AND THE ASBURY JUKES: LIVE AT THE PARADISE THEATER, 12/23/78

A riveting live set capturing the energy and excitement that made Southside Johnny shows the stuff of legend, touring here for the classic *Hearts of Stone*. Features the "The Fever" and a slew of other Springsteen and Van Zandt compositions, as well as two Christmas songs never released on any Southside album. An official Southside release from Phoenix Gems.....\$17

BOCCIGALUPE: IT'S MY TURN, NOW

More sounds of Asbury Park, from the ashes of Cahoots. Featuring two Little Steven covers, "Forever" and "Until the Good is Gone." Check it out!.....\$14

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shows. The next time I saw him was in the horrendous Wembley Stadium in 1985 when I nearly got beaten up by some fat drunk bumpkin in a bandanna, and the sound was terrible. I realized then that his legendary concern about his fans getting good sound must have stopped at the border of the U.S.

The next tour was *Tunnel of Love*. Endless guitar solos at the end of what seemed like every song. Terrible sound again. Setlist the same every night. Actually bored for the first time. Then we wait five years for a Toto album with him singing a nursery rhyme to his kid. I didn't even bother with that tour.

But the feeling persisted that Bruce was still special, still that much better than his contemporaries, because of the spirit behind the things he did. This fell apart after the *Greatest Hits* and *Tracks* extra-tracks scams. This is just money grubbing. You know it is. And no new records for five years. Again.

So, if there's nothing special about him anymore, what's the point of following as a fan? None that I can see.

Paul Kennedy
London, England

SO MUCH THAT YOU WANT

Dear Editor:

I'm just back from New York, and I am really curious to hear the reactions of the fans present at the final show. I also need an honest opinion of if I am overreacting! I did enjoy it, but I left a little disappointed. I think the potential for a blockbuster show was evident, especially with that particular crowd. I've been to 14 shows, and this particular crowd was the best by far, even better than opening night in Jersey and the birthday show in Philly.

I will admit that it was a long and full show. I will admit that I lost my voice during "Lost in the Flood." It was the highlight of all my shows. But although the length was there, the quality and "Bruce energy" was lacking. I felt the set was a little too standard. I know, "Atlantic City," "E Street Shuffle" and "The Promise" are not the norm, but I expected songs that are a little more rare and songs that are crowd friendly, like "Trapped," "Spirit," "Growin' Up," "Incident," or

"Candy's Room."

I do like the three new songs, but not for the final show of the tour—and possibly forever—with the band. "Blood Brothers" is a great song and touching tribute, but it is not a show- and tour-ender. Besides, isn't "If I Should Fall Behind" the tribute to the band? I spoke to fans from London, Germany, Canada, Italy, and all over the U.S. before the show in the hotel bar. We all had a few things in common: we all had been to numerous shows, we all paid "an arm and leg" for the tickets and travel, and we all expected to see the greatest show ever. Was there too much hype? Did I build this up too much? Am I being too hard on the Boss? Am I overreacting?

Chris Stevers
via e-mail

PERFECT ENDING

Dear Editor:

I walked into the final show on July 1 knowing something special would happen. It did. "Lost in the Flood" made its first appearance since 1978 and was truly amazing. Considering the wide variety of songs he has performed in the past year, Bruce had a lot of choices for the final night. His 28 selections were just about perfect. From the rarities to the well-honed staples of the set, it was a powerful night with laughter, tears and every emotion in between.

There were yahoos in the crowd yelling for "Rosalita," but Bruce and the band ended the show with a wonderful, emotional version of "Blood Brothers." As the song closed, Bruce motioned the band to join hands ("C'mon C," he said to Clarence) and they sang the final words together. Bruce appeared on the verge of crying. They walked off to thunderous applause. "We'll be seeing ya," he said. We can only hope it's true.

Peter Abraham
via e-mail

Everybody loves getting mail, and we're no different. Backstreets welcomes letters, epistles, missives and dispatches equally and with open arms. We read every single one, and we print as many as space allows. E-mail us at editor@backstreets.com, or mail to Backstreets Letters to the Editor, PO Box 11079, Washington, DC 20008.

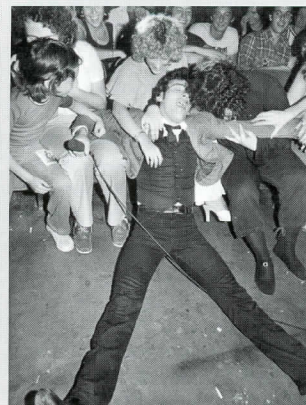
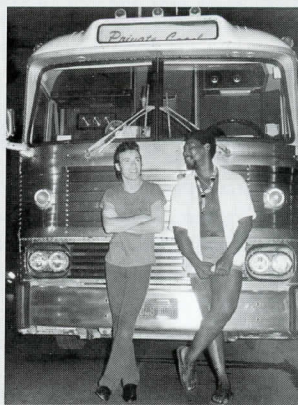
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In her new book, Lynn Goldsmith's photographs chronicle Bruce and the E Street Band's daily life during the 1978 *Darkness on the Edge of Town* tour. Packed with stunning black & white photos of Bruce and the band, an incredible visual document. Goldsmith was on the road with Bruce and the band for much of the tour, in a unique position to capture all aspects of their life on the road, on-stage, off-stage, and backstage. *Springsteen: Access All Areas* is a 128-page paperback with never-before-published photographs. Signed edition for the cover price of \$20.



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**BACKSTREET
RECORDS**

Raise Your Hand

By Christopher Phillips

It's amazing how many people still seem to think we've heard the last of the E Street Band. Some fans are still seeing the 1999-2000 tour as some kind of last hurrah. But it's safe to say that the future holds more E Street action, if for only one reason: because Bruce Springsteen said so.

Springsteen hasn't exactly been running on at the mouth. But from the very beginning of the tour to the very end, he let audiences know that we could consider this a rebirth and a rededication of the band's "commitment to serve." On a tour when Bruce didn't say much at all—even when baited by clueless critics who misunderstood his work—we can assume he means what he says.

So the real question has been not *whether* Springsteen would lead the band again in the future, but *where*. The E Street Band hasn't released new studio material since *Greatest Hits*, which captured a band searching for direction in the studio, and a band-leader searching for songs that fit. Even much of the new tour found them looking to older material. True, reinvention ruled, as on the overdrive coda of "Prove It All Night" and the band's new claim on "Human Touch," with the band making such great new music from old songs, it never felt like a nostalgia tour. Still, it left only a hazy impression of where they could go from there. "Land of Hope and Dreams" gave us both hope and dreams of such things, but it was at the very end of the tour that we witnessed the real paradigm shift, proof positive of a new path for the E Street Band.

One thing that may have been lost amidst all the "American Skin" controversy and overreaction is what the song bodes for Springsteen musically and for Springsteen fans. "American Skin" assimilates social criticism and rock music in arguably his most seamless and powerful example—it's neither an acoustic dirge nor incongruously uptempo—since "Roulette." It's like few other songs that Bruce has done in sound and style—it sounds *new*—but it bears the E Street stamp all over it, from Roy's cascading piano to Max's thundering drums. "American Skin" looks to new horizons for what Springsteen can do with his songwriting and what the rededicated E Street Band can do for his songs. And as if that opened the floodgates, songs like "Code of Silence" and "Another Thin Line" showed that rather than a fluke, we're looking at the future.

In the short term, it's a waiting game. But in a way, at *Backstreets* we're glad for a breather. With all the recent activity, from the news of *Tracks* two years ago through the tour, there have been a lot of *Backstreets* standbys that haven't made it to these pages in a while. We're not going to complain about having a tour to cover, but it's been seven years since our last all-encompassing readers' poll. A lot has happened since then: Back in 1993 we asked for "Best unreleased song," and of the top ten results, nine of them have since been released. Of the 15 top picks for "Song not played in 1992/93 you'd like to hear played live," 13 of them were played on the 1999-2000 tour. Time for another poll.

We've also had a lot of readers ask about the *Backstreets* Trivia Quiz, the last round of which was responsible for a spike in hair loss among Bruce fans back in 1995. The Ultimate Quiz III is in the works, and the winner of the last two (!), Robert Crane, has taken himself out of the running—to give someone else a chance, and to help write the questions.

Watch for these and more in the issues to come. But while you'll find the final 2000 Tour reports in these pages, we're still not quite done with the tour. In *Backstreets* #68, we're planning a grand look back at the E Street Band reunion, and we need a little help from our friends. Below you'll find a list of ten questions—not the overarching readers' poll we're planning for later, but a tour-specific poll to find out fan favorites, now that it's all said and done. We're looking for favorite songs played on the

tour—it's up to you to decide what's rare and what isn't; we're looking for a few favorite moments—whether a "moment" is Bruce atop the piano every night, or something that only happened once. Send in your picks for the ten questions below, and we'll compile and run the results next time.

Obviously, *Backstreets* is dependent upon its readers and wouldn't exist without the help and support from fans. Special thanks this time out to: Jim Abbot, Peter Abraham, Bill Ali-candro, Tony Amato, Noah Belman, Ted Benson, Harvey Berkman, Dave Bernstein, David Bilotti, Karl Birthistle, Christine Bracken, Kevin Cherry, Peter Church, John Colarelli, Kevin Compton, Eric Coulson, Rocco Coviello, Janet Crump, Paul Deppen, Frank Di Stasi, John Duda, Barclay Ericson, Marc C. Fatica, Dave Gaetano, Andrea Goode, Jon Greer, Bert Haughin, Lisa Ianucci, Linda Iorio, Chris Karas, Lowell Kern, Joe Kunec-ki, Tony Kuzminski, Sharon LaVoy, Stu Levine, Joe Lewin, Ken Lund, Sean McGrath, Joni-Jean Marchio, Steve Marlin, Scott Matis, Dave Miller, Phil Muollo, Scott Neal, Mike Novak, Dave Palughi, George A. Paul, Richard Pitoscia, Steve Prokopy, Victoria J. Pursell, Peter Shea, Rick Shear, Chad Silver, James Smolens, Steven Svoboda, Dominic Toto, James Turano, Karen Weaver, Tom Weiss, Emmett Williams, Mitchell Zener, and everyone else who's pitched in over the course of the tour. It's been a ride, ride, ride—thanks for making it with us, and I hope you'll stick around for more to come. Now get your pencil out and get to work. ➡

the backstreets jukebox

1. Jayhawks
Smile
Columbia (CD)

2. Mark Kozelek
Rock 'n' Roll Singer
Badman (CD)

3. Jurassic 5
Quality Control
Interscope (CD)

4. John Wesley Harding
The Confessions of St. Ace
Mammoth (advance CD)

5. Pete Townshend
Lifeline Elements
Redline (CD)

6. Chris Whitley
Live at Martyrs
Messenger (CD)

7. Dan Penn
& Spooner Oldham
Moments From This Theater
Proper/Bluefive (CD)

8. Ida
Will You Find Me
Tigerstyle (CD)

9. Archers of Loaf
Seconds Before the Accident
Alias (CD)

10. Kurt Elling
Live in Chicago
Blue Note (CD)

1999-2000 Tour Readers' Poll

1. Top five standards (songs played on a regular basis)
2. Top five rarities (songs played infrequently)
3. What song would you have liked to hear that wasn't played?
4. What song, if any, could be retired?
5. Best stand of the tour
6. Strongest show of the tour
7. Weakest show of the tour
8. If you could go back in time, which *one* show would you see—whether to relive a concert or catch one you missed?
9. Top five favorite "moments" on the tour
10. A tour-related "Top Five" list of your own devising—anything goes!

We've set up an e-mail address just for this poll, so you can send your picks to poll@backstreets.com. Fax to (202) 232-2259; mail to *Backstreets* Readers' Poll, PO Box 11079, Washington DC 20008 USA. We'll be sending *Backstreets* T-shirts to five responders at random, so be sure to include your name and address! Look for the results in *Backstreets* #68.

10
Monster
Discs to Play Today
and Everyday

John Wesley Harding goes down to *The River*

"Wreck" Duet on CD

By Christopher Phillips

John Wesley Harding already has the distinction of being Bruce Springsteen's only opening act in nearly 25 years, as Bruce tapped him to open the Berkeley shows of the *Tom Joad* tour. Now comes the release of a duet between the two, on one of Bruce's songs—with Springsteen singing harmony. If Harding didn't have a healthy career and strong fan base in his own right, he'd still have a place cemented in the world of Boss trivia.

In June of 1994, Harding played a series of shows at the very intimate McCabe's Guitar Shop, which holds roughly 100 people. On June 18, one of those 100 was Springsteen, who showed up unannounced. Harding tells *Backstreets*, "I didn't know that Bruce was going to show up in the first place; I vaguely heard that he might come to one of the nights." The surprise guest later came on stage for "Wreck on the Highway." The impromptu duet has remained Bruce's only performance of the song to date since 3/28/85 in Sydney.

As Harding recalls, "I knew the song, and Robert [Lloyd, the accordionist] knew it, because it was in our set. We had played it the night before, because we decided it was just a nice song to do—as I've played 'The Promise' at various times, and as I've played 'I Wanna Marry You,' 'The River'—all kinds of Bruce songs have popped up during my sets. So it just happened that that was the one we were doing or 'knew' right then. So I suggested it.

"He said, 'Sure, but I haven't done it in ages, I don't know whether I'll remember all the words.'" Springsteen hadn't played the song in nearly a decade, which had a lot to do with the style of performance. According to Harding, they didn't even get to rehearse it all the way through beforehand. "I started singing it, and he just started singing those high parts, and I think that was good for him,



6/18/94: Bruce Springsteen's only "Wreck on the Highway" in 15 years, with John Wesley Harding.

because I *did* know the words, and that way he could lay off the beginning of lines a little bit. On the tape it sounds like we rehearsed quite a bit, actually. There's an accordion and two guitars; Bruce is doing the guitar "solo," as it were, doing the parts, and I'm just kind of strumming along, and we're both singing it. It's great—I mean, I remember it being one of the most exciting events of my life, obviously, but it's a really good duet, I think."

Six years later, that duet is seeing official release on CD. Wes was putting together some bonus tracks to go along with a pair of reissues on Appleseed, and "Wreck on the Highway" came to mind. While the performance has made it to a Bruce bootleg or two, it's never been heard in this quality. "I have the board tape from McCabe's," Harding says, "and I hadn't listened to it in three or four years. It was great singing with Bruce Springsteen, obviously, but you don't listen to it over and over again. I was speaking to the guy who does my tapes for me, who records shows and archives them, and I asked if he had a good audience tape. He did have one that he'd made at that show, which was before I had him officially work-


ing for me. And so when we were mastering the album, I wanted to see if it would be possible to mix the board tape with the audience tape. We tried it, and it just sounded fantastic."

In addition to "Wreck on the Highway" and three other bonus tracks, the reissue of *Awake* also includes another of Wes's takes on Bruce, previously issued on *One Step Up/Two Steps Back*: "The only other song recorded during that session that I felt represented the sound of the album was 'Jackson Cage,' which I cut for the Springsteen tribute album on Capitol. It's the only other song that was completely recorded during the album sessions and is a real outtake from the album, even though it's a cover."

Appleseed is reissuing *Awake* as well as another Harding album, 1999's *Trad Arr Jones*, both with an extra 20 minutes or so of bonus material. While the reissues won't be in stores until January of 2001, they will be available in advance at Wes's gigs, as well as by mail-order through Appleseed, www.wesweb.net, and Backstreet Records. Part of the reason for the delay is so as not to draw attention away from his new album, *The Confessions of St. Ace*. A pop album Wes is excited

about, *Confessions* is due on August 29 on Mammoth.

If recording for various labels simultaneously has been easier than one might have thought, what about permission to include Springsteen? Sometimes all you have to do is ask the right guy. At the April Tacoma Dome show, Wes was backstage with Bruce, talking about putting "Jackson Cage" out as a bonus track. "There was nobody else around at all, we were just hanging out," Harding remembers. "And finally we were just halfway through a drink or something, and I said, 'Well hey, how about I put that 'Wreck on the Highway' we did at McCabe's on there?' and he said 'Yeah, great idea.' So I just piped up at the right time." Wes laughs, "I told him I didn't think it would do his career any harm, I thought it'd be good for him."

Once Springsteen had given the green light, Wes says, his label only had one request: "They said they wanted to reserve the right to use it themselves on something. And we said, 'As often as possible! Be our guest! Any time you want to use it on a Bruce rarities CD...'—because that would mean there was a track produced by me. And I'd like that quite a bit." 

BORN AGAIN BENEFICENT:

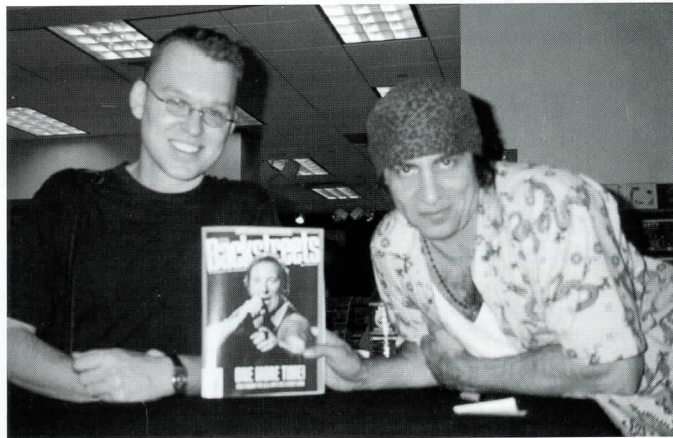
When Little Steven made a signing appearance at Tower Records during the course of the Garden stand, the only thing savage about it was the turn-out. A line of fans stretched around the block and down the street. Ever-gracious, Steve practically signed his hand off, and when his scheduled two hours were up, with a throng of fans still waiting, he kept at it and stayed around as late as he could. He finally took names and addresses of the last few remaining fans, promising to send them something signed (and at his own expense). How's that for a little human touch? . . . With all quiet on the Bruce front following the end of the tour, Steve's graciousness also extended to sharing some info with fans; though no one knows what Bruce's next move will be, Steve provided a few glimmers of hope. At another signing later in July in Eatontown, NJ, Little Steven told fans that the tentative plan was to hit the road again before too long. Due to other commitments—with Steve himself looking at an intensive filming schedule for *The Sopranos*—we shouldn't expect E Street activity for at least the next nine months, but after that, anything goes. Steve also suggested that Springsteen wanted to have a new album to support for a future tour. Of course, that news can cut both ways: if your cup's half-empty, there's no doubt that the inevitable delays of a new album will delay another tour; in the cup-half-full view, we'll get both a new album and more shows before long. Time will tell. . . . Steve also confirmed the rumors that a live DVD is in the works for the holidays. No official word on a release as we go to press, but it seems likely that Santa will have something special in his bag for all of us. At least all of us with DVD players.

GOOD SPORTS: A lot of Springsteen fans in New York had a good day on July 1, but check out Mets pitcher Al Leiter. A Jersey boy, Leiter had already secured his tickets to the final Springsteen show that night; but first, he won his 100th career game, beating the Braves 9-1. He

came out to the mound for the start of the game to "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," and batted to "Born to Run"; as he told reporters after the game, "I've had my Springsteen tickets for about a month. When I saw I was down to pitch, I knew it was going to be a good day." . . . *Sports Illustrated* published a letter from Monica Hamilton of East Syracuse, NY, in their June 19 issue: "A few months ago I attended a Heat game in Miami. The ticket cost \$37. Recently, I attended a Bruce Springsteen concert in Hartford. That ticket cost me \$37.50. Who performed for 180 minutes without so much as a 30-second timeout? Who drank at least three gallons of Gatorade and sponged himself off eight times while giving his fans their money's worth? Who has the best "big man" who plays a mean sax and probably could dunk a basketball? I only have one question: Mr. Springsteen, how can I purchase season tickets to you?" . . . As long as we're citing stats: Midway through 2000, *Pollstar* magazine listed Springsteen and the E Street Band's tour as the top-grossing tour of the year so far, averaging \$1,674,465 per show. So "Backstreets" beat the Backstreet Boys, who came in at number six.

BIG FUN ON THE BAYOU:

Oh, to be a crawfish on the wall. Springsteen and Patti Scialfa recently joined Emmylou Harris in the studio in New Orleans. On March 20, the day after Springsteen's New Orleans Arena concert, Mr. and Mrs. S. contributed vocals to the Harris-penned "Tragedy," for her forthcoming *Red Dirt Girl*. The new album is being produced by Malcolm Burn, who engineered her 1995 masterpiece, *Wrecking Ball*. (Burn, just to play six degrees of the Boss, also produced Chris Whitley's "Big Sky Country," heard over the P.A. after Springsteen shows on a nightly basis.) Harris is a long-time Bruce fan—she took in a *Tom Joad* show in Nashville and a 1999 show in Washington D.C., and she's covered his songs numerous times. In fact, two of those covers are recently available on CD reissues. *Last Date*, a live set, includes a beautiful "Racing in the Street," and *Cimarron* has "The Price You Pay." Both albums are on disc

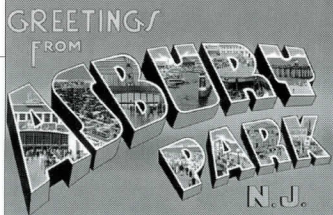


Little Steven and a little light reading at Tower in NYC, 6/28/00, with Backstreets editor Chris Phillips.

now for the first time, on Eminent Records. Look for *Red Dirt Girl* on *Grapevine* in September. . . . Dion, another branch of Springsteen's mutual admiration society, has a new album out now featuring two Bruce covers. *Deja Vu* finds Dion tackling songs from *Lucky Town*, "Book of Dreams" and "If I Should Fall Behind." Bruce said that he gained new insight into how "Fall Behind" could be performed after singing it with Dion on the *Tom Joad* tour; don't miss the doo-wop master's take, on Collectables Records. . . . Elliott Murphy's 1995 collaboration with Springsteen, "Everything I Do," originally on Murphy's *Selling the Gold*, has been made available as a free MP3. The song was added to Murphy's page on mp3.com in April; in June, after more than 130,000 downloads, it topped mp3.com's "most-listened-to" chart for more than a week. Thanks to the free download, Springsteen fans can get their hands on a relative obscurity free of charge, and those unfamiliar with Murphy are exposed to another great singer/songwriter at the same time. Nothing for Lars Ulrich to get pissed about here, this one's legal.

IN BLOOM: Sub Pop—not just for grunge anymore—is paying tribute to Bruce, and in fine style. The label is enlisting heavy-hitters to cover *Nebraska* from start to finish, even requesting four-track recordings in the spirit of the original. The current line-up: "Nebraska," Chrissie Hynde; "Atlantic City," Hank Williams III; "Mansion on the Hill," Billy Bragg; "Johnny 99," Los Lobos; "Highway Patrol-

man," TBA; "State Trooper," Deana Carter; "Used Cars," Ani DiFranco; "Open All Night," Jay Farrar; "My Father's House," Ben Harper; "Reason to Believe," Aimee Mann and Michael Penn. Plus two bonus tracks: "Downbound Train," by Raul Malo, and "Wages of Sin" (artist TBA). Look for it on November 7. . . . Speaking of *Nebraska*, Tom Cruise referenced the album as a favorite when talking to Vanity Fair about role in *Magnolia*: "Not every picture is the same. And I gotta do what I gotta do. It's like Bruce Springsteen's *Nebraska*. I love that album. It wasn't as big as *Born in the U.S.A.*, but what a classic album. It has an audience in me." . . . On their fourth album, *That's All Folks!!!*, Italian band the Groovers cover two Springsteen songs, "Factory" and "Stolen Car." See their website at www.echobeat.it/groovers. . . . Kevin Montgomery's new CD, *Another Long Story*, includes a cover of "I Wish I Were Blind." "I've been a huge Springsteen fan since college," the the L.A.-based singer-songwriter tells *Backstreets*; his faithful rendition is getting significant airplay on BBC2 and is worth seeking out. Interestingly, the cut includes harmony vocal from none other than '92-'93 bandmember Gia Ciambotti. Formerly on A&M, where he worked briefly with Roy Bittan, Montgomery put out the new album on his own label, Road Trip Records. *Another Long Story* is a collaboration with Doug Pettibone (brother of producer Shep), and the pair will be touring with former members of the Mavericks. Keep an eye out, and check out www.kevinmontgomery.com for more information. ➔



Rock 'n' Roll Chemistry

Boccigalupe

By Robert Makin

Back in the early days of the Stone Pony, three bands ruled the Asbury Park music scene: Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes, the Shakes, and Cahoots. They defined the blue-collar rock and soul dubbed the Sounds of Asbury Park.

Tony "Boccigalupe" Amato, the keyboardist in Cahoots, has formed a new band, Boccigalupe & the Badboys, with his old bandmates, drummer Steve Schraeger and bassist John Luraschi. Rooted in the Asbury tradition but with a few new twists, the Tuckerton, NJ-based band also includes guitarist Billy Walton, drummer Bill Jordan and saxophonist Rich Taskowitz.

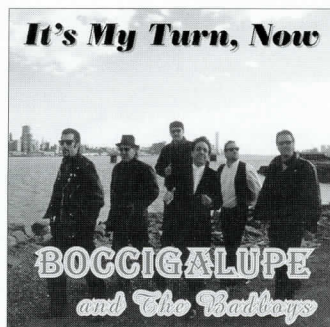
Cahoots saxophonist Tommy "Taco" LaBella also appears on *It's My Turn*, Boccigalupe & the Badboys' debut for Amato's Atlantis Records. The disc includes several original originals that range from soulful rock to pop metal, plus two Steve Van Zandt covers from Little Steven's *Men Without Women* album, "Forever" and "Until the Good Is Gone."

Where did you get the nickname Boccigalupe?

It comes from the old Abbott and Costello Show. Springsteen gave me that name. Him and Van Zandt. We played softball with them back in Cahoots. Every Sunday we'd meet for softball games against other teams. One time we played Crosby, Stills & Nash. Bruce told everybody to dress funny, so I got there in green knickers and knee socks like The Little Rascals. Next thing you know the two of them are laughing, saying, "He looks like Boccigalupe." The name stuck forever.

I understand Cahoots used to play the "Detroit Medley" before Springsteen and the E Street Band did.

I remember me and John Luraschi, who's playing bass with me now, saying, "We gotta get a



medley going." So we worked out the Mitch Ryder medley. Cahoots had a record deal, and at the same time we were playing every Wednesday and Sunday night at the Pony. I was living on Eighth Avenue in Asbury. Bruce was going out with my girlfriend's roommate. He must have seen the setlist on the kitchen table. He'd show up and do the medley with us. Finally when Cahoots met its demise, there's Bruce doing the Mitch Ryder medley.

How did Boccigalupe & the Badboys go from being a fun reunion with Schraeger and Luraschi to a recording project and a regularly gigging band?

I've been trying to put something together the last five or six years. I been going through musicians in this state to find the combination that worked. I was playing with different guys, but it wasn't cutting' it. Then at the Stone Pony closing, I got together with George Theiss Band, and that was like a reunion of Cahoots and Cold Blast and Steel. At the time, John needed a place to stay so I said come live with me in Tuckerton. Then we picked up the drummer Bill Jordan from Toms River and the guitarist, Billy Walton, who's only 25. We've got that same chemistry that Cahoots had. The chemistry is right between everybody. This band is Cahoots without Mike, George and John Oser—only better, I think.

We're doing some of the same stuff, but this kid Billy brings a little younger flavor to the older tunes. It's not so much the sound,

it's more an energy and chemistry. You can get a bunch of guys who are the greatest musicians in the world and when they play, nothing happens; but you can get some guys who aren't even good to get together to play and you've got chemistry. That's what really makes it, the chemistry between musicians rather than, "Let's figure out a sound."

How did the Van Zandt covers come about?

I saw Steve at Big Man's West years ago with the Disciples of Soul. There was this one song, "Forever," with a horn line with such a hook. So I called Steven and asked, "Would you mind if we cover couple tunes?" He said, "No, go ahead. Get the music out there. Why let it sit?" I sent him a demo, and the next thing you know me and the guitar player are going to New York so Steven could fix what was wrong.

After more than 25 years of being connected to the Asbury music scene, the Badboys are the first band you're fronting. How's that feel?

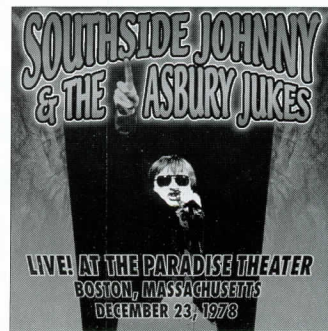
I should have done it 20 years ago.

Amato has also taken it upon himself to organize a 20th Anniversary party for *Backstreets* this fall in Asbury Park. Besides Boccigalupe & the Badboys, the lineup will include a variety of Asbury- and *Backstreets*-related bands. "Backstreets has been serving us for 20 years, now it's time to give something back," he says, "to take care of the people who've taken care of us. What I'd like to see happen is a lot of the old people come out and have a good time. I'll contact John Eddie and Joe Grushecky and the whole old clan and we'll see who shows up." Watch www.backstreets.com for more news on the 20th Anniversary celebration. For more information about Boccigalupe & the Badboys, visit www.boccigalupe.com

Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes recently returned to Martell's, a Point Pleasant Beach boardwalk bar it used to play in its early days. As for a record, it's been a long time—but if all goes according to plan, Southside will have that long-awaited solo blues album produced by Garry Tallent out on his own Internet-distributed label in the fall.

In the meantime, Jukes fans will dig *Live! At The Paradise Theater, Boston, Massachusetts, December 23, 1978*. The live disc was released by Phoenix Gems, one of three labels operated by Phoenix Media Group. Tracks include a really hot Christmas goof on "Stagger Lee," plus covers of "Santa Claus is Back in Town" and "Merry Christmas Baby," also immortalized by Springsteen. And of course, the set has plenty of non-seasonal numbers, with more than a handful Springsteen and/or Van Zandt-penned Jukes favorites such as "This Time It's for Real," "Love on the Wrong Side of Town," "Talk to Me," "The Fever," "I Don't Want to Go Home" and "When You Dance."

The *Hearts of Stone* gig captured here was during a transitional period in Jukes history. The band was about to part with Epic and sign with Mercury, which released *The Jukes* the following year and the single, "Trapped Again," the last significant Jukes collaboration with Springsteen and Van Zandt until 1991's *Better Days* album. A pre-released live version of the tune is on the Phoenix disc. ➔



41 shots

YOU CAN'T START A FIRE WITHOUT A SPARK. Who knows whether Bruce Springsteen saw New York City as a powder keg, but sixteen years to the day after *Born in the U.S.A.*'s release, he and the E Street Band debuted a new song that would act as flint and steel.

With less than a month to go in their 15-month tour, Bruce and the band had one last stop before the final stand at Madison Square Garden. The June 4 concert in Atlanta opened with the world premiere of "Further on Up the Road," the first new song performed since "Land of Hope and Dreams" at the dawning of the tour. That

would have been enough to make a landmark night on the tour. But a few songs later, Springsteen presented another debut. "This is a new song called 'American Skin'," he told the crowd, and then in a murmur, "'41 Shots.'" Judging by the rapt crowd's response, the power of the song was immediately clear, but it was hard to foresee that this single

performance would generate a conflagration of international headlines. The following week witnessed the biggest misinterpretation of a Springsteen song since "Born in the U.S.A.," and the greatest controversy of his career.

THE SOUND AND THE FURY

BY
CHRISTOPHER
PHILLIPS

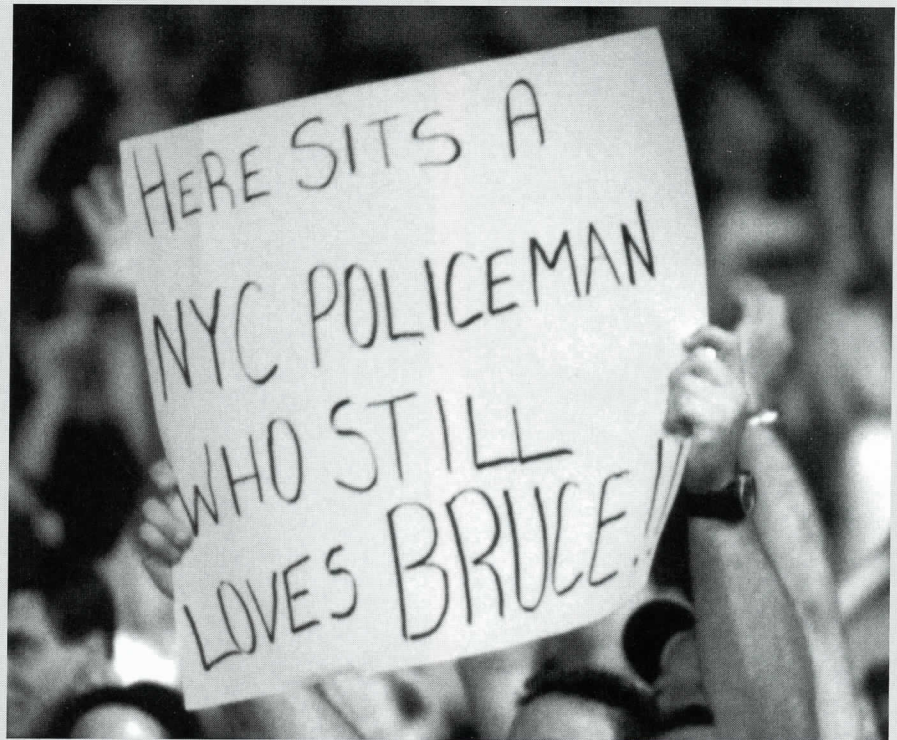
Until Atlanta, only the title of "American Skin" had circulated among fans as a new song soundchecked on several occasions. A novel of the same name by Don De Grazia was published in April. De Grazia's *American Skin* is the coming-of-age story of a non-racist skinhead. It was unclear whether Springsteen's song would share any of the same themes, but with his penchant for "borrowing" titles, from "Thunder Road" to "Born in the U.S.A.," it was at least an interesting coincidence. However, as the somber intro to the song unfolded for the first time on June 4—the Philips Arena echoing with the words "41 shots," repeated over and over—to anyone familiar with the tragic death of Amadou Diallo, it was clear that Springsteen's inspiration for the song came from somewhere else.

On February 4, 1999, an unarmed Guinean immigrant lost his life when four New York City police officers mistook his wallet for a gun. In the vestibule of his Bronx apartment, Amadou Diallo was reaching for his wallet when the officers fired 41 times. Nineteen of those shots hit their target, killing Diallo. A year later, at a trial in Albany, NY, the officers were acquitted of second-degree murder charges.

Diallo is never mentioned by name in "American Skin"—in fact, characters in the song are explicitly named otherwise—but the repetition of "41 shots" is an unmistakable reference to his shooting. The tragedy divided the city: sympathy for peace officers and understanding of human error, however tragic, met cries of brutality, excessive force and racial profiling. While the officers were cleared of all charges, their acquittal made Diallo's death no less grievous; an unarmed man had been shot and killed.

From its bedrock refrain of "41 Shots," the song embraces broader themes. It should come as little surprise that Springsteen the songwriter would be inspired by the shooting and the issues it raised, having raided the news for recent songs like "Sinaloa Cowboys" and "Balboa Park." "American Skin" crystallizes many of the concerns Springsteen has written about over the years: how circumstance affects our actions, choices made when it counts, our country's responsibility to live up to its promise, fair treatment and social justice, the fight for a life free from fear. The remarkable thing is that Springsteen was able to evoke larger meanings from such a specific and well-known incident, to universalize the issues behind such a tragedy, and still create a moving elegy to Amadou Diallo.

In "American Skin," Springsteen took a specific incident and addressed universal concerns, presenting his audience with its complexity and turning the tragedy into powerful art. But such complexity doesn't always play to the masses, and the backlash came fast and furious. When a song can go from a concert tape to MP3 to national network news faster than you can say "Napster," soundbites or a few words out of context quickly become the basis



A SIGN FROM ABOVE

At the June 29 Madison Square Garden concert, Springsteen pointed up into the crowd at a sign he clearly appreciated—not a request, but a show of support. The New York City police officer who held up the sign spoke with Backstreets shortly after the Garden stand.

"I personally know Bruce is pro-cop, because I met him six or seven years ago. I happened to be in a small bar on the Jersey Shore. It was a Saturday afternoon, a beautiful day out, me and my friend went in to watch the Yankee game, and Springsteen came into the bar. He sat down next to us, and we just talked. I think it was '92, because I was still in the police academy, and this is when he was going on tour with the 'anti-E Street Band.' I told him I was a New York City cop, in the police academy, and he thought that was the greatest thing in the world. He asked if I was scared, the whole nine yards. He thought it was great.

"When [Patrick] Lynch announced the boycott, I called the PBA, because I had tickets for six of the ten shows. They put me on the phone with somebody on the legislative board there. And I asked why the boycott, and they said, 'Because Bruce is anti-cop.' I told them about things Bruce has done for police officers, and they said 'Well, we still want you to boycott the show.' I asked, 'Am I getting my money back from you guys?' No. So the only people who are losing money are the cops that bought tickets to the shows, and the guys who might have a chance to work the show and earn some extra money. And he said, 'Well that's the way that we feel.' It finally got the point where I said, 'You know what? Go screw yourself, I'm going to the shows.'

"I was terrified bringing that sign into the arena. It could bring major repercussions for me at my job. But I did that sign to show Bruce that I still loved him and his music. I figured, what the hell. I know plenty of cops who were for Springsteen, and I know plenty who just don't like his music to begin with. They all make fun of me, because I go to so many shows. But I didn't tell anybody I was going to these. My partner knew, and then a couple other people found out—at one of the shows I actually ran into someone I work with. Honestly, they don't care about the Springsteen boycott. The reason cops were upset about this is because it was more of what they perceived as negative press. I thought it was more negative press when Lynch called for the boycott.

"I was trying to figure out the right moment to hold the sign up. He had already played 'American Skin.' Bruce was walking over to my side of the stage, and I held up the sign, and he gave it a double take. He pointed the sign out to Patti, Steve and Garry as he was walking back to the microphone, and he got back to the mic and said, 'Now there's a sign I like!' He started clapping, and Little Steven saluted. During the course of the night I must have had 20 people come up to me and tell me it was a great sign. The next show—because I wore the same shirt, I guess I made it obvious, that shirt you could see from 20 miles away—I can't tell you how many people came up to me, and hugged me, and told me it was the greatest thing in the world." 🐾

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON, BOYS?

LETTERS TO BACKSTREETS

Forty-one shots must be the amount of alcohol Mr. "Out-of-Touch" Springsteen consumed before composing that horrible song. He should keep his mouth shut regarding events about which he has no right commenting. Since becoming a zillionaire, he can buy an island somewhere and not have to deal with the scum who create doubt in a police officer's mind about what items they are carrying on their person. Those police officers had every right to do what they did. Springsteen is a loudmouth who should concern himself with his own failings and not the perceived failings of individuals who are out on the "backstreets" each and every day trying to protect the innocent.

Donna R. Cubberly
via e-mail

With all due respect, I feel this is a major overreaction on the part of the PBA. People need to read the lyrics to "American Skin" and make their own decisions. Being a police officer, I will always "stick together" with fellow officers, but we as a group must realize this is not that big of a deal. As for Bruce Springsteen fattening his wallet, he will make more money on this tour than I will in my entire career as a City Police Officer. But Bruce is not interested in monetary gain—just ask all the charity organizations across the U.S. he has contributed to in the last 12 months.

The Boss is an open liberal, unlike myself, and I can't say I agree with him on any political issues. But he is also a songwriter, who has been painting pictures for 30 years for his fans to relate to. I believe the lyrics to the song are pretty objective, just stating (what he perceives as) facts. I see no racial profiling involved. I don't think we should look at this through the eyes of a defendant.

Chris Stevers
P.O. 2280
Cleveland, OH

I am a New York State Court Officer, and my brother is a 14-year vet of the NYPD. At times like this in our city when you have to put on a uniform everyday and face the public, it gets difficult. It is hard to be despised by the public that you swore to protect and serve. The Amadou Diallo tragedy was just that: an American tragedy. And who better than an American storyteller to force us to examine our world after such tragedy? He is daring us to change the city we live in, daring us to love each other, and begging us to not give him another American tragedy to write about. Bruce is doing what he does best: making us see ourselves through eyes that we would prefer to keep closed. He is saying, "this is your life"—and he means *all* of ours, no matter what side of the table. I applaud and thank Bruce for the song, and I wept at the Garden when he performed it.

Tara (last name withheld by request)
via e-mail

Talking about an incident is not necessarily a criticism of the people involved in that incident. Personally, this song has caused me to strongly consider opinions I hold, and helped me to recog-

for judgment. At least people who misinterpreted "Born in the U.S.A." had actually heard the song.

The first rejoinder came from Patrick Lynch, President of New York's Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, which represents 27,000 police officers in the city. Lynch encouraged officers to boycott the Springsteen concerts in his June 8 letter, posted on the New York's PBA website (www.nycpba.org):

Singer Bruce Springsteen has begun performing in concert a song called "American Skin"—the title seems to suggest that the shooting of Amadou Diallo was a case of racial profiling—which keeps repeating the phrase, "Forty-one shots." I consider it an outrage that he would be trying to fatten his wallet by reopening the wounds of this tragic case at a time when police officers and community members are in a healing period, and I have let his representatives and the press know how I feel about this song.

I strongly urge any PBA members who may moonlight as security or in any other kind of work at rock concerts to avoid working Springsteen concerts. He is scheduled to appear at Madison Square Garden for a 10-day stand beginning June 12, and the PBA strongly urges you not only not to work this or any other Springsteen concert but also not to attend.

Let's stick together on this important issue.

Fraternally,
Patrick J. Lynch
President

In the very first sentence, Lynch implies that he hadn't heard the song or read the lyrics, and indeed, the following day a PBA spokesman told the LiveDaily music website: "I'm sure he hasn't heard the song. I'm sure this is all based

on the news reports and complaints from the membership."

It was also curious that Lynch accused Springsteen of "trying to fatten his wallet." As many pointed out, the remaining concerts were long sold-out, and the song has not been for sale in any format. It seemed a strange allegation in general, since Springsteen is widely recognized as an artist who follows his muse rather than the marketplace. Even more ironically, the "airplay" the song did get, on network news and cable talk shows, came from a bootleg recording. Though the idea of Springsteen making money on the song was easily dismissed, the accusation still struck many fans as an unjust attack on Springsteen's integrity. Still, Lynch was soon telling a New York City crowd rallying against Springsteen, "We don't need a millionaire coming down here and making money off our backs ... on a terrible, terrible tragedy."

Lynch wasn't the only police representative speaking out against Springsteen; other prominent officers voiced support of the boycott. New York City Police Commissioner Howard Safir told the *New York Daily News*: "I personally don't particularly care for Bruce Springsteen's music or his song. That's my personal opinion."

In the most bizarre condemnation, Bob Lucente, President of the New York State Fraternal Order of Police, not only spoke out against the song but disparaged Springsteen himself. Lucente told SonicNet on June 9, "He's turned into some type of fucking dirtbag. He goes on the boycott list. He has all these good songs and everything, American-flag songs and all that stuff, and now he's a floating flag." Lucente was soon apologizing to gay police officers for the slur, but not to Springsteen, maintaining the comments were made "out of disgust toward a public figure whom I once admired, not against someone's sexual preference."

The misinterpretation wasn't simply the result of defensive police officers. As the backlash quickly became national news, many in the media also twisted the meaning of the song. Stanley Crouch described "American Skin" in the *Daily News* as "depicting Amadou Diallo as a victim of racist cops gone trigger-happy"; articles in the *Post* said the song portrayed cops as "cold-blooded killers" and that Springsteen "wants to act as some kind of court of appeals."

Not all police officers supported the boycott. In a published letter to the *New York Times*, New York City police lieutenant Michael J. Gorman wrote that Lynch made "a serious mistake" in condemning Springsteen, that "artists are supposed to shake people out of their complacency, not protect them from embarrassment and controversy. Trying to muzzle those who refer to this tragedy is wrong. Mr. Springsteen has generally been a supporter of police officers, giving generously to police charities. Attacks on him are not only unfair but also counterproductive."

A group called 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care also came out in support of Springsteen. In an Associated Press story,

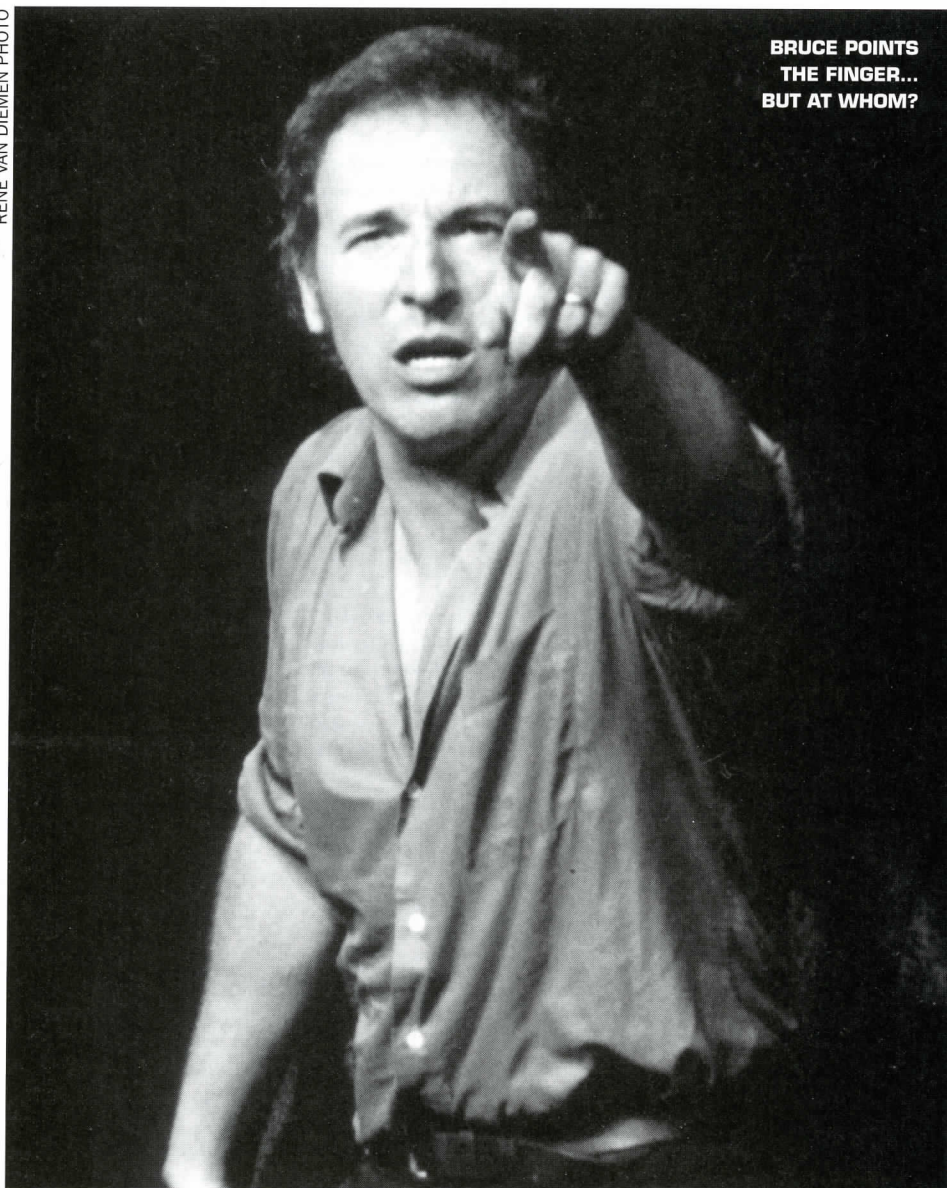
PARADISE FOUND
MEL CHEREN LOOKS BACK ON A LEGENDARY DANCE CLUB (SEE PAGE 24)

Blade NEWS

Springsteen labeled 'fag'
President of Fraternal Order of Police slurs rock star, drawing fire

Big Three to offer partner benefits
In Zimbabwe, drag queens push community's envelopes

'Liberated queens' speak out
In Zimbabwe, drag queens push community's envelopes



**BRUCE POINTS
THE FINGER...
BUT AT WHOM?**

spokesman Police Lt. Eric Adams said, "We commend Bruce Springsteen, and we believe that he is courageous in the position that he is taking." Adams told the *Star-Ledger*, "We're defying the PBA. They don't have their fingers on the pulse of the rank and files.... We believe that too many African-American artists have remained silent and have failed to address this situation."

As for the boycott, many police officers chose to attend the Madison Square Garden concerts anyway—whether to "boo" during the song or show their support—as Springsteen and the E Street Band played "American Skin" without comment every night.

Springsteen supporters frustrated by the "anti-cop" accusations pointed to Bruce's sympathies for law enforcement, from characters in his songs to, most prominently, the 1998 benefit concert for the family of a slain New Jersey officer, Sgt. Patrick King. But for evidence that "American Skin" was wrongly accused, one needs look no further than the song itself. Quite simply—it's not even a mat-

ter of interpretation—"American Skin" is not anti-cop.

Playing "American Skin" at all ten shows in New York, Springsteen clearly wasn't backing down. But more to the point: the more the band played the song, the more opportunity the audience had to hear the words. As Steve Van Zandt told the *New York Post*: "I would hope that people would listen to the song and read the lyrics before they make a judgment on these things." If the song was going to speak for itself, Springsteen seemed intent to let it do the talking as much as possible.

While the song is clearly a lament, "American Skin" does not take sides, as the perspective shifts from a concerned mother to a police officer. To hear the word "vestibule" and think of Diallo without catching the rest of the line is to miss the point: "You're kneeling over his body in the vestibule, praying for his life." This is a remorse-filled police officer, not a "cold-blooded killer."

As Hendrik Hertzberg wrote in the *New Yorker*, "Unless any song suggested by the Dial-

nize that certain actions I take and beliefs I live under are part of the bigger social fabric of my country and city. That is exactly what the song should do for everyone, and I believe that if those who are so quick to condemn it listened to the words and considered their true meaning, instead of indulging in knee-jerk reactions, that would be the case. I have never been prouder to be a Bruce Springsteen fan than I am after hearing "American Skin" performed.

**Debbie Hoehn
Emerson, NJ**

My question is, why didn't the ultra-liberal Springsteen write a song about the New York City crime rate during the David Dinkins administration which recorded an outrageous 2,300 murders in 1992? Thanks to Mayor Giuliani and his implementation of the Street Crime Unit, the murder rate in New York has dropped an astonishing 70 percent, down to just over 600, making New York the safest big city in the country. Where's the song about that?

Yes, the Diallo shooting was a tragedy of Shakespearean proportions. But if Bruce wants to write a political song about it, I say he should dedicate his next CD to the 1,700 lives a year that are spared by Giuliani's aggressive police force. Maybe he could call it "Murder Incorporated Gets Busted."

**Eugene R. Dunn
Manorville, NY**

Do you think any NYC Cops will be looking to sell their tix after that letter from the PBA? I'll gladly take them off their hands.

**Jason Rogers
Raleigh, NC**

Although I am a long-time Springsteen fan, I must admit that my first reaction when hearing this song was negative. I am a firm believer in the American justice system and felt that Bruce might be out of line, since the officers were in fact acquitted of any wrong-doing. However, I am glad that I did not jump to a hasty conclusion before I had seen the actual lyrics to the song.

I am afraid that Mr. Lynch might be jumping to that same hastily conclusion. Anyway you look at the situation, it was a tragedy in that a innocent man was killed. Mr. Springsteen, like other great American folk singers before him, is simply telling the tale, the sadness and sorrow that it should bring to all Americans.

**Mike Bodayle
Franklin, Tennessee**

A mother pleads with her school-bound child to obey the rules and always be polite if stopped by an officer. This doesn't suggest police brutality or abuse, it only suggests that the world is a dangerous place, for both police officers and citizens alike. If rules are obeyed, it can make a police officer's job much easier. I have a 5-year-old son. He is a white, Italian-Irish American boy. When he is old enough to walk the streets by himself, I will teach him to act much in the way that Mr. Springsteen sings about in his song. The line "You can get killed just for living in your American skin" was criticized for being a statement about racial profiling. Last time I checked, American skin was made up of many different nationalities, races, and colors. You can get killed, police officers can get killed... the line applies to everyone, and the Diallo tragedy should be a lesson for everyone. Many police officials screamed that the communi-

ty was in a period of healing and this song is damaging the process. Is that what healing is about? Forget that it ever happened? Don't dare speak about it? How nice would it be for the NYPD to stand up and say, "Let's not forget what happened. This is a tragedy for everyone. Let's learn from this." Denial won't heal any wounds. Silence will only widen the gap.

I have many family members and close friends who are police officers in New York and New Jersey. I have a tremendous amount of respect and admiration for the jobs they do under the most difficult circumstances, often with inferior pay.

Thomas Nasso
Aberdeen, NJ

If all his songs were taken the same way, I guess the cable company would boycott him also: after all, "57 Channels (and Nothin' On)." Doesn't say much for them.

Ted Bishop
via e-mail

The thing that bothers me is that no one seems to understand what Springsteen is trying to say. Even the articles that defend him seem to misunderstand the song. Maybe I'm completely off-base, but I think "American Skin" is a song that everyone should be able to agree with, and I see no reason for any group to take offense. The phrase "American Skin" has been interpreted by most people as meaning being black, but I think it means you can get killed just for living in this country no matter what color you are. If I were a cop, I would thank Springsteen for writing a song that I believe acknowledges and sympathizes with a cop's worst fear: shooting an innocent person. I've heard the song in concert five times, and every time I hear it I am more convinced that it is pro-cop all the way. Cops have to deal with the fear of losing their lives every day. I used to think that cops abused their power sometimes, but now I understand that what I used to view as an abuse of power is actually the result of living with a constant fear. And that fear is the same fear that the mother in the song has for her son Charles, that an innocent person can be killed just for living in his American Skin in a world and a country that at times can seem like it is Murder Inc.

Jim Florimont
Lavallette, NJ

I've been an ardent fan of Bruce Springsteen's for 25 years, and I have a younger brother who is an NYPD detective. I can only reaffirm how proud I am of both associations. My brother was accused of assaulting a drug dealer during an arrest several years ago. He was completely exonerated at trial by a judge who immediately saw through the trumped up charges. Despite his acquittal, he still carries a burden but continues to do his job in the professional manner of a working man who believes in his mission. The same can be said for Bruce. It was amazing to read some of the vitriol in the New York papers regarding "American Skin." To those who felt "betrayed" and thought Bruce was, "one of us," rest assured: he is one of all of us. When I read letters from "longtime fans" who disavowed Bruce for his message, I thought of Dylan's words, "I couldn't believe that after all these years you didn't know him any better than that." I urge Bruce to release this powerful, poignant song.

Larry Thompson
via e-mail

to tragedy is deemed ipso facto anti-police—unless actual content does not matter—then this song is not anti-police.... What's striking about the song (especially in contrast to the obtuseness of the attacks on it) is its imaginative sympathy. The first verse takes the point of view of one of the officers, whose action is not exactly that of a murderer.... The second verse is in a mother's worried voice.... The third verse brings the two voices together in suffering, with a subtle hint of redemptive hope. The refrain combines the voices, too, without quite blending them, in a way that makes clear that the American dilemma enmeshes us all."


The recurring questions in the song—"Is it a gun? Is it a knife? Is it a wallet?"—are the life-and-death questions that must be answered by police officers on a daily, and often split-second, basis. "This is your life" and "You can get killed just for living in your American skin" apply not only to Diallo, but to the officers, to the fictional "Charles," and, thanks to the song's careful ambiguity, to every other ear that hears it. In one powerful song, Springsteen manages to give voice to each. He speaks for victims, for those filled with remorse, for concerned mothers. If blame—or responsibility—is placed anywhere, it is on all of us: "We're baptized in these waters, and in each other's blood."

Beyond the anti-cop allegations, Springsteen was accused of betraying his longstanding concern with "blue-collar" concerns. Some who see Springsteen as a blue-collar spokesman saw "American Skin" as treachery. But Springsteen's writing has always been more concerned with what we have in common, rather than those labels that set us apart. In 1998, Bruce talked to Will Percy about the intent behind his songwriting: "to establish a commonality by revealing our inner common humanity—by telling good stories about a lot of different kinds of people. The songs on [The Ghost of Tom Joad] connected me up with my past, with what I'd written about in

my past, and they also connected me up with what I'd felt was the future of my writing."

Rather than an about-face, "American Skin," is another in a long line of his songs about men and women affected by forces beyond their control, and it's stylistically very similar to the way Springsteen has approached his subjects for years. Like "Roulette" and "Souls of the Departed," the new song confronts some of our culture's anxieties and fears. Like "Youngstown," "My Hometown," and "The Ghost of Tom Joad," it examines the state of our society, and who or what may be falling by the wayside. Like "Streets of Philadelphia," "Born in the U.S.A.," and "Dead Man Walkin'," it gives a powerful voice to what might otherwise be heard as a "social issue." In all these songs, Springsteen describes very specific, individual experiences to address a larger concern. As he put it to Percy, "The characters are confronting the questions that everyone is trying to sort out for themselves, their moral issues, the way those issues rear their heads in the outside world."

Rather than making judgments in these songs, Springsteen instead reframes those issues in a world of characters and poetry, forcing his listeners to reconsider their position—or to have one in the first place. By letting his audience react to the plights of individuals in his songs, he elicits a much more honest, visceral reaction from his fans, and leaves it to them to draw the larger conclusions. The songs don't give you a reaction—they compel you to have one.

After the "code of silence" that followed the verdict in Albany, there's certainly been no shortage of reactions in the wake of "American Skin." Misinterpretation aside, the controversy over the song is a testament not only to Springsteen as an American observer, but to the power of art to make people think, to change views and create public debate. Springsteen fans have been reminded on a regular basis of the power that music can have, and it's good to see the rest of the world, for however long, get shaken awake. 

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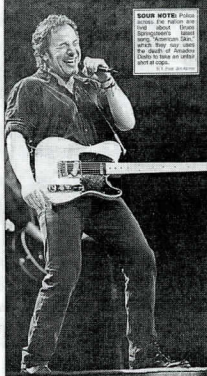
Cop union urges
Garden boycott over
Boss' Diallo song
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8th AVE.

FREEZE-OUT

Health probes: West Nile Virus is back again PAGE 5

COPS TO BOSS:
GO JUMP IN THE
RIVER, DIRTBAG!
PAGE 3



Bruce doesn't dare face heroes he slanders

STEVE DUNLEVY

BETWEEN WHAT'S FLESH AND WHAT'S FANTASY

"I was interested in writing about everything in some fashion in my music: how it felt to be alive now, a citizen of this particular place and time, and what it meant, and what your possibilities were if you were born and alive now."

—Bruce Springsteen, interviewed by Will Percy, *DoubleTake* magazine, Spring 1998

A bearded, young beat poet romantic, wise to the vitality and tragedy of the New York Streets and Jersey Shore boardwalks, becomes an isolated everyman voicing the pleas of the heartland's disenfranchised. In tight jeans and bandanas he danced with Courtney Cox; with greased-back hair he voiced the painful realities of southwestern border towns. The constant changes of Bruce Springsteen's image have been accompanied by alterations to his songwriting and sound. Some things, however, have endured. Springsteen has always remained committed to his high standards of artistic integrity, sung about what he knew and what he strove to comprehend, and he has always asked more of his audience than most, if not all other rock musicians.

Dedicated to the constructed narratives of his studio albums, Springsteen has many times asked us to be patient for new material. We were asked to be quiet and attentive during the *Tom Joad* Solo Acoustic tour—AKA the "Shut the Fuck Up Tour"—and for years, concertgoers have been asked to support causes from Amnesty International to local foodbanks. Most importantly, he has asked us, time and time again, to take the questions with which he confronts his characters and apply them to ourselves. Attempts to understand himself and society—and his own responsibilities to that larger community—have always seemed a central motivation for Bruce's writing. The resulting body of work can help us attain a better understanding of ourselves. In a 1998 interview in *DoubleTake* magazine, Bruce told Will Percy, "As a writer, you're searching for ways to present different moral questions—to yourself, because you're not sure how you will respond, and to your audience. That's what you get paid for, from what I can tell. Part of what we call entertainment should be food for thought."

Springsteen's "American Skin (41 Shots)" is a continuation of the "food for thought" that he has offered us throughout his career. "American Skin" raises many questions beyond whether Bruce himself is anti-cop or not. Understanding the song as a diatribe against police brutality is an adulteration of the lyrical intent of the song, as well as a simplification of the issues that it raises. The song is a perfect example of what Springsteen is capable of doing when he is at his best: allowing us a look into ourselves and into the society that we are all partly responsible for constructing.

Bruce has stated before that he never sits down to write a song with the intention of conveying an implicit political message. He told Bob Costas, "I don't start from any political point of view. Everybody carries their politics

innately and emotionally in their psychology in some fashion." Rather, he attempts to voice the intimate stories of the individuals that these issues directly affect. *Nebraska* and *The Ghost of Tom Joad* exemplify Bruce's method of confronting social issues by showing us rather than just telling us something. Instead of directly telling us that the burgeoning division of wealth in America was corrupting the very precepts that this country was based upon, Springsteen presented us with human stories of those who were being marginalized.

In "Johnny 99"—an exploration into the degenerative effects that unemployment was having on the small town in 1980s America—Bruce puts the larger social questions in intimate terms. His audience isn't meant to exonerate the song's protagonist for his violent actions, but to understand the personal consequences of such

SPRINGSTEEN HAS ASKED US, TIME AND TIME AGAIN, TO TAKE THE QUESTIONS THAT HE CONFRONTS HIS CHARACTERS WITH AND APPLY THEM TO OURSELVES.

social issues as separation of wealth, gun control, and alcoholism. In "Sinaloa Cowboys," Bruce examines the methamphetamine manufacturing businesses of the American Southwest and the immigrant workers it exploits. The song, inspired by headlines and hard facts, tells a tragic story: two Mexican brothers come north in search of a piece of the American Dream, only to find themselves faced with a deadly reality.

With "American Skin," Bruce has once again used his songwriting as a vehicle to explore public questions in a personal light, with the setting now America's inner cities. The same themes—the perversions of the ideals of the American dream—are being discussed, only the environment and circumstances have changed. All three songs illustrate one of Springsteen's greatest talents as a songwriter: winnowing through the perceptions of our society, and bringing to life some of the darker realities of the American character—realities than many of us like to ignore. Violence, exclusion, and fear are the substance of everyday life for millions of Americans, and "41 Shots" is a reminder of that fact.

Discussing his *Tom Joad* performances, Bruce described his intentions to Will Percy: "Presenting ideas, asking questions, trying to bring people closer to characters in the songs, closer to themselves so that they take those ideals, those fundamental questions about the way that we live and the way that we behave towards one another, and then move those questions from the aesthetic into the practical, into some sort of action." Bruce continues that method of presentation with "41 Shots." The song is a call to action, an attempt to evoke a sense of communal responsibility.

Springsteen has long been committed to the idea, as Mikal Gilmore once put it in *Rolling Stone*, "of turning the rock and roll audience into an enlightened and active community"—a community where individualism is highly valued, but also one in which a shared burden must be carried by all. Springsteen's music has always espoused the contradictions of the American character, conveying a sense of America as a perfect ideal but not ideally perfect. Bruce talked directly of this idea of a shared burden at his 1981 "A Night for the Vietnam Veteran" concert, saying: "There is a lot in American history that you're proud of, and then there's a lot you're ashamed of. And that burden, that burden of shame, falls down. Falls down to everyone."

"American Skin" can be taken as a reminder of that burden; we are all crossing that "bloody river" together whether we like to believe it or not. We are all part of a society in which violence and fear have become an accepted part of life, a society where diminished hopes and oppressed dreams are all too common, and there can be no change unless we all accept our individual responsibility and connection with those who are being victimized. As Springsteen sings in "Code of Silence"—its debut performance widely interpreted as an answer to the "American Skin" debate—"There's a wall between us so high and so deep / And we keep pretending that there's nothing wrong / There's a code of silence that can't go on."

This idea of individual responsibility and burden is a notion central to the music of Bruce Springsteen. As he said in a 1987 interview, "The idea of America as a family is naive, maybe sentimental or simplistic, but it's a good idea. And if people are sick and hurting and lost, I guess it falls to everybody to address these problems in some fashion. Because injustice, and the price of injustice, falls on everybody's heads."

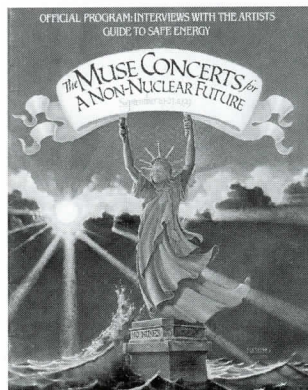
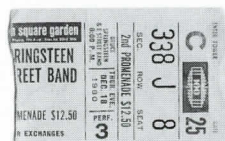
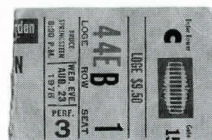
Bruce boiled it down at the beginning of the "Born to Run" video—"Remember, nobody wins unless everybody wins"—and developed it further on the *Tom Joad* tour when he expounded on John Steinbeck's theory of "one big soul." "American Skin" is another reminder of the individual responsibility we have to ensure that the idea of America as a place in which everyone is entitled to pursue a life with integrity and hope is not a false dream—a lie. The song is a call to awareness. We all have some responsibility; we are all baptized in these waters and in this blood, together. ➔

BY MICHAEL NEWALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS ARENA



FRANK DI STASI PHOTO



IN AN AGE WHERE ARENAS AND BALLPARKS ROUTINELY sell their names to corporate sponsors, Madison Square Garden is simply known—on its letterhead and in general—as “the world’s most famous arena.” Currently at its fourth location, the Garden has been in operation since 1879. The first three Gardens were primarily known for the major sporting events that they housed, but the fourth Garden also became a legendary venue for live music. Since opening in 1968, the “new” Garden has presented just about every major musical act there’s been. In addition, many well-known live albums and television broadcasts have emanated from the Garden stage. Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley and the Rolling Stones have all been recorded live there, and the Beatles—individually, not collectively—have all appeared on the Garden stage. A full list of the artists who have performed there would read like the index of a music encyclopedia.

Bruce Springsteen’s first chance to play the Garden came in 1973, when he was a relatively unknown artist who could barely fill small theaters. Through the efforts of then-manager Mike Appel, Bruce was to be the opening act for the very popular group Chicago. Marc Eliot wrote in *Down Thunder Road: The Making Of Bruce Springsteen* that “Bruce was the worst opening act imaginable. The traditional way of breaking a new act on the road by coupling it with an established group just didn’t work with him. Most of the crowds that came to see and hear the pseudorock pretense of the supergroup Chicago were ill-suited for the blast and maelstrom of Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.”

The Chicago tour—at least Bruce’s portion of it—amounted to 12 shows in ten East Coast cities, with the final two coming at the Garden on June 14 and 15. It should have come as no surprise to anyone that an audience primed to hear top ten hits like “Saturday in the Park” and “Feelin’ Stronger Every Day” would only be confused by songs like “Tokyo,” “Thundercrack” and “Wild Billy’s Circus Story.” Even if the audience had been familiar with the *Greetings From Asbury Park* album, it wouldn’t have mattered. Bruce’s typical set during the Chicago tour featured mostly unreleased songs. Most nights only two or three songs in Bruce’s seven or eight song set were from the album.

Although popular legend has it that Bruce was mercilessly booed during the Chicago tour, that wasn’t the case each night. For the first Garden show Chicago allowed Bruce to use their video screen. According to Appel, as recounted by Eliot in his book, “the date went great. Maybe too great.” For the second show, Bruce wasn’t allowed to use the screen. “It was a disaster,” said Appel. “So Bruce got understandably pissed.”

As bad an experience as the Chicago tour was for Bruce, there must be something sentimental about it for him. In a photo on page 218 of *Songs*, Bruce and Patti Scialfa are seen in front of some framed memorabilia; sure enough, there on the wall of his home is an item with the Chicago logo. Perhaps there are fond memories now, or irony has cast those shows in a different light, but at the time Bruce opted to avoid large venues in general and Madison Square Garden in particular. It would be five years before he’d return.



The period between the Chicago tour and Bruce’s eventual return to the Garden stage in 1978 saw him rise from an obscure opening act to an arena headliner. Bruce’s reluctance to play large arenas gave way to a practical need to satisfy the demand for tickets. For the *Darkness on the Edge of Town* tour, dates in small venues were mixed in with arena shows. In New York, for example, three Madison Square Garden dates were followed a few weeks later by three more at the much smaller Palladium. Tickets for the Garden shows were sold by mail order and were quite scarce as a result. There were also fewer tickets than usual for an arena show, because no seats behind the stage were sold. A large black curtain was hung to hide all of the rear seats, giving the Garden the look of an immense theater.

Bruce’s first shows as a headliner at the Garden took place on August 21, 22 and 23, 1978, while New York City was in the middle of a lengthy newspaper strike. With none of the local newspapers being published, there wouldn’t be any reviews, and there was no chance that the media would even mention the Chicago debacle of five years earlier. (There were a few renegade newspapers published by striking employees of the big papers but they barely mentioned Bruce’s shows.) Bruce acknowledged the newspaper strike by opening the second show with a classic cover, “Good Rockin’ Tonight,” and calling out the opening line, “Have you heard the news?” several times.

The ’78 Garden shows featured a lot of material from the new *Darkness* album, but not at the expense of old favorites. The show simply got longer. For the first time, the 1978 tour shows were split into two sets. For the Garden shows, the new material was eased in to the show, with five of the ten new songs being played the first night. Eight were played on the August 22, and nine on the final night. The overwhelming audience response to the new songs surely influenced their increased number after the first show; only the rarely

A BOSS HISTORY OF MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

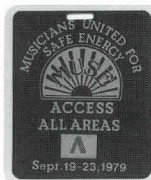
BY ROBERT S. BADER

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

The World's Most Famous Arena

played "Something in the Night" was skipped. Like many of the 1978 shows, the setlists at the Garden were loaded with covers of Bruce's favorite old songs. "Summertime Blues," "Heartbreak Hotel," "Sweet Little Sixteen," "Good Rockin' Tonight," "Not Fade Away," "Gloria," "Mona," and "High School Confidential" all turned up. Even a few new unreleased songs like "Fire," "Sherry Darling" and "Paradise by the C" were included. In a truly wonderful moment during the encores on the final night, Bruce's mother came onstage to admonish him into continuing the show.

If any doubt existed about Bruce's ability to connect with the audience in a large arena, it was dashed at the Garden in 1978. Bruce was more physical than he'd ever been onstage. Sure, he always jumped on the piano, but now he was climbing the rope ladder to the lighting rig and swinging from it. He was actually in the audience, and the fans up front on opening night tore his shirt apart. His torso was visibly scratched. And he laughed at the people who were grabbing and pawing at him. The word of mouth on Bruce's live show had been great for a few years, but now the word was, "see this guy live before he kills himself onstage."

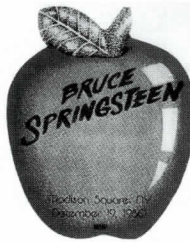


When the *Darkness* tour ended, fans were not sure when they could expect to see Bruce back on the road. The lengthy hiatus before that tour was mostly the result of legal difficulties, but fans had grown accustomed to the idea of a long wait. It was a great surprise when a series of benefit concerts to promote non-nuclear energy were announced in the summer of 1979 and Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band were among the performers. There were five MUSE (Musicians United for Safe Energy) concerts planned at the Garden, with Bruce featured in two of them. He would share the stage for the final two nights—September 22 and 23, his 30th birthday—with several other performers, notably Jackson Browne, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, and Bonnie Raitt.

The shows must have made Bruce think of the Chicago tour. Some performers were subjected to the sound of twenty thousand people chanting Bruce's name, which of course could easily be mistaken for booing. In *No Nukes*, the film of the concerts, Bonnie Raitt is seen consoling Chaka Khan: "Too bad the guy's name wasn't Melvin." Particularly with those two concerts being the only sold-out shows of the five concerts, it was clear that the audience was there for Bruce.

The promoter's original announcement included the information that Bruce and the E Street Band would perform for one hour on each of the two nights—with Bruce having just completed a tour of three hours, providing that caveat was considered necessary. As it turned out, they played for an hour and a half each night. Bruce's set was a condensed version of a typical *Darkness* tour set—so condensed, in fact, that "Prove It All Night" was played without the extended introduction for the first time. Several songs from *Darkness*, a few old favorites, and the brand-new song "The River"

comprised the main set. The encores were a bit different each night. Jackson Browne joined Bruce for a duet on "Stay," which was followed on the 22nd by the "Devil with the Blue Dress Medley" and "Rave On." The following night it was followed by an extended version of "Quarter to Three," "The River" and "Devil with the Blue Dress Medley" (albeit in edited form) were released on the *No Nukes* album. "The River," "Thunder Road," and portions of "Quarter to Three" were included in the *No Nukes* film.



After Bruce's five-year absence from the Madison Square Garden stage, he'd now played there two years in a row. The release of *The River* in 1980 and the tour that followed would continue that streak to three years. Once again, tickets to Bruce's Madison Square Garden shows would be sold only by mail order. This time there were to be four shows, and seats would be sold behind the stage—another concession to the practical realities of audience demand. The tickets for the 1978 shows were scarce, but the mail order system seemed to work in a fairly efficient manner. The same could not be said for the 1980 shows. Corruption within the Garden led to large amounts of tickets ending up in the hands of ticket brokers. Many fans found that, rather than tickets, their envelope from Madison Square Garden contained the following letter:

Dear Patron:

We regret that we were unable to fill your order for the Bruce Springsteen concerts, as more than 300,000 requests were received for the four concerts. Because of this overwhelming demand we were able to fill only one order for every four received.

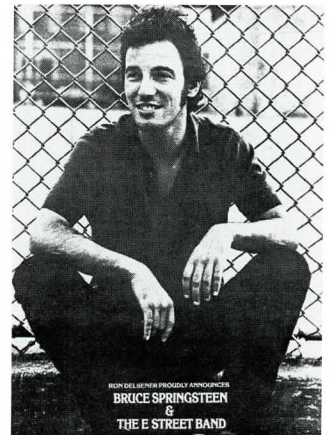
Your interest and continued patronage is nevertheless very much appreciated.

Very truly yours,
Madison Square Garden
Ticket Department

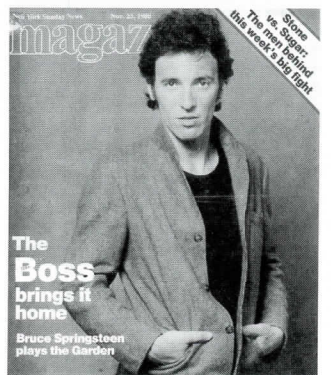
Based on the number of requests, Bruce could have played sixteen sold out shows at the Garden in 1980. It soon became apparent that "continued patronage" of Madison Square Garden would not result in Bruce Springsteen tickets, but patronage of just about any local scalper would. The state Attorney General investigated and concluded that there had been foul play, but of course nothing could be done to recover any tickets that had been illegally sold.

Due to the difficulty of scheduling multiple-night engagements in arenas during the hockey and basketball seasons, Bruce's four Garden shows were scheduled as two separate stops on the tour. The first two shows were on November 27 and 28. The tour then moved on to seven other Northeastern cities before returning to the Garden on December 18 and 19.

For the *River* tour, Bruce often played as many as 16

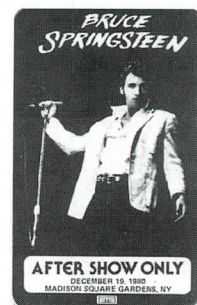


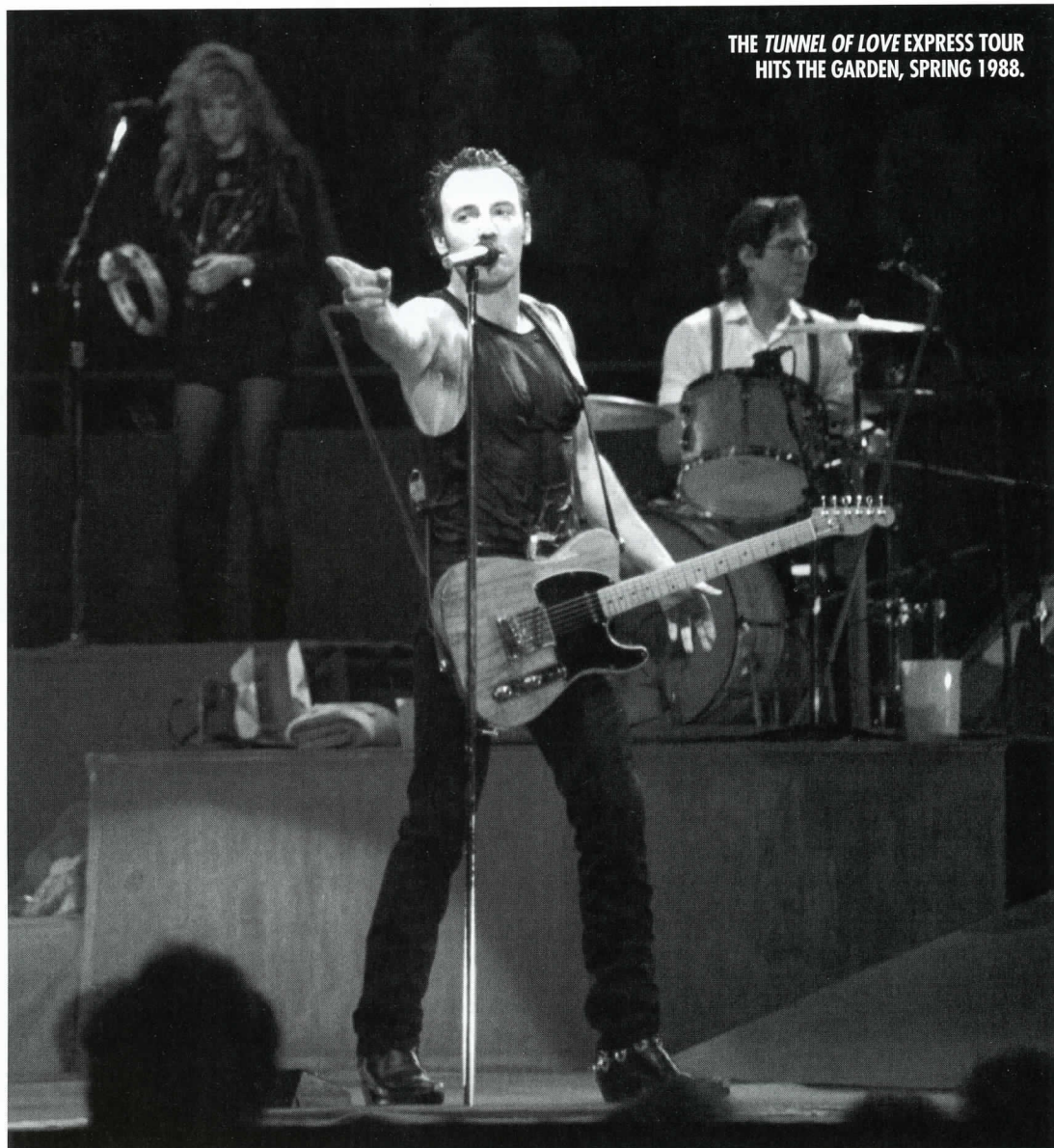
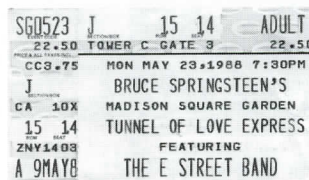
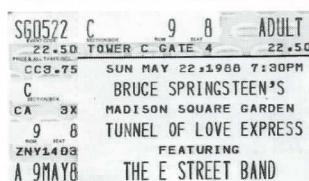
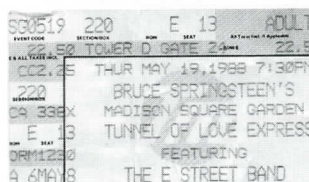
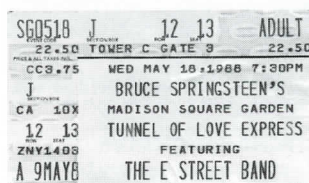
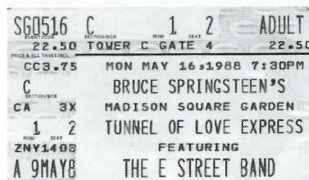
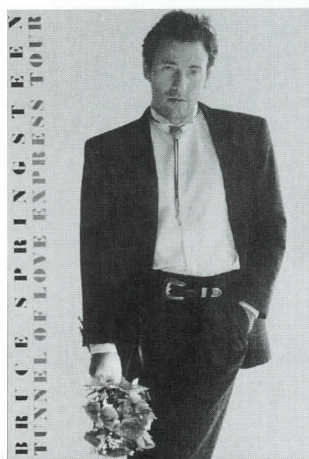
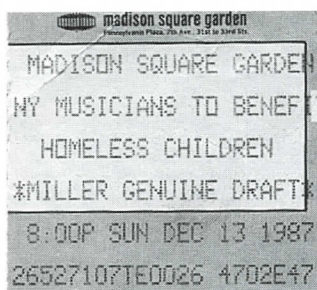
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
NOVEMBER 27, 28 & DECEMBER 18, 19—8 PM
ALL SEATS \$10-\$25. 100% Refundable. Tickets available by mail order only. Tickets for the four concerts were received for the four concerts. Because of this overwhelming demand we were able to fill only one order for every four received.



madison square garden
FOUR FORTSEVEN PLAZA NEW YORK, N.Y. 10001 (212) 563-8000

Dear Patron:
We regret that we were unable to fill your order for the Bruce Springsteen concerts, as more than 300,000 requests were received for the four concerts. Because of this overwhelming demand we were able to fill only one order for every four received.
Your interest and continued patronage is nevertheless very much appreciated.
Very truly yours,
Madison Square Garden
Ticket Department





of the album's 20 songs in a show. With such a large portion of the set devoted to the new material, he would either have to sacrifice some of the early material or simply play longer shows. Although some old standards were no longer played, the show grew to marathon length. The first Garden show approached four hours in length and included 31 songs. The next night's set had 33—the wildly enthusiastic audience was rewarded with rare performances of a couple of those discarded early songs, "For You" and "Sandy." The shows were even longer when the band returned in December.



The tremendous success of the *River* tour and four spectacular New York shows would have seemed to point to many future stops at Madison Square Garden. Curiously, the 1984-85 *Born in the U.S.A.* tour skipped New York City altogether, opting for two multiple-night stands in New Jersey. Perhaps the memory of the mail-order ticket fiasco and the media coverage of the investigation had something to do with it. It could have also

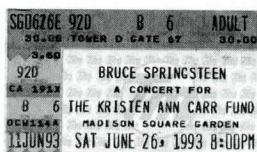
been a simple matter of scheduling. Either way, nearly eight years would pass after the *River* tour before Madison Square Garden would host another Bruce Springsteen concert. But he did turn up there on a couple of occasions before his official return. On August 2, 1983, he joined Jackson Browne for "Stay," "Running on Empty" and "Sweet Little Sixteen." It would be a stretch to call Bruce a "surprise guest" for his next Garden visit, since his name was on the T-shirts with all of the advertised artists, but as poorly kept a secret as his appearance was, Bruce was not officially billed as one of the performers at Paul Simon's benefit concert on December 13, 1987. The show raised money to purchase mobile medical facilities for New York's homeless children. Early in the show Bruce, Simon, James Taylor, Billy Joel, Lou Reed and Ruben Blades were honorary Belmonts, joining Dion for "Teenager in Love." Later Bruce returned for the first acoustic version of "Born to Run" and all-star jams on "Glory Days" and "Rock and Roll Music."

At the time of the Simon benefit show, the *Tunnel of Love* album had been out for two months, and an announcement of a tour was hotly anticipated. The tour was already in full swing in 1988 when ticket sale information was announced for the New York dates:

five dates at the Garden on May 16, 18, 19, 22 and 23, to end the U.S. leg of the tour.

Touring with a horn section for the first time since 1976-77, Bruce and the band came to New York in May after having been on the road since February. The five Garden shows were clearly the highlight of the whole tour: the setlists were filled with unique and unusual song choices, and each show sustained an incredibly high energy level from start to finish. Prior stops on the tour had seen Bruce barely varying the set list, and the reviews were less enthusiastic than usual. Among the highlights at the Garden were Bruce's first-ever performances of Roy Orbison's "Crying," Jackie Wilson's "Lonely Teardrops," and Woody Guthrie's "Vigilante Man." There was also a rare performance of Ry Cooder's "Across the Borderline." And as Bruce left the stage at the first two shows, the band played "New York, New York." It was during this run that Bruce's performances in the *Folkways: A Vision Shared* video of "Vigilante Man" and I Ain't Got No Home" were shot.

Bruce made one more brief Garden appearance in 1988. On August 25, he joined Sting for acoustic versions of "The River" and "Message in a Bottle." Both of those songs would be regularly performed on the Human Rights Now! tour for Amnesty International that began a week later. The Amnesty tour would turn out to be the last for the E Street Band for eleven years.



During that E Street hiatus, Springsteen played only one other show at the Garden. The final show of Bruce's 1992-93 tour with his new band, the Concert for the Kristen Ann Carr Fund took place on June 26, 1993. Kristen Ann Carr, who had died of sarcoma in January of that year, was the daughter of Bruce's co-manager Barbara Carr.

The concert raised \$1.5 million for the cancer research charity, but will more likely be remembered for an ugly incident that prompted Bruce to refer to the audience as "a bunch of rude motherfuckers." In a show filled with rarely played songs—a duet of "Lonesome Valley" with Joe Ely, "Rockin' All Over the World," "Follow That Dream" and an acoustic version of "Blinded by the Light"—the audience greeted special guest Terence Trent D'Arby with a chorus of boos as he started to sing "I Have Faith In These Desolate Times." Bruce was stunned, as were many other fans. D'Arby had been a favorite of Kristen's, and he had been invited to honor her. Bruce was clearly embarrassed by the reaction and angrily chastised the audience. The incident was followed by a well-received duet by Bruce and D'Arby on "Jumpin' Jack Flash." D'Arby returned for an encore duet of "Jole Blon." Certainly the D'Arby incident was not the best way to end a tour, but the show was certainly one of the best of the tour and raised a lot of money for charity.



To many, the E Street Band had become a distant memory. There was the brief reunion for the *Greatest Hits* album in 1995, but that was followed by a lengthy solo acoustic tour. The full-scale E Street Band reunion tour announced in 1999, 11 years after their last tour, concluded with ten shows at Madison Square Garden from

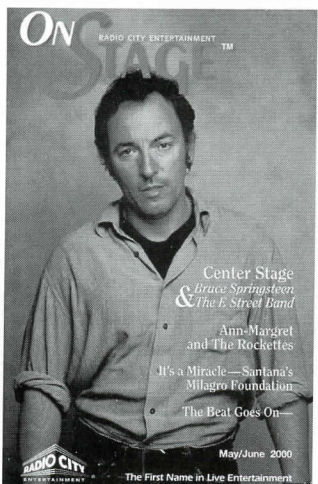
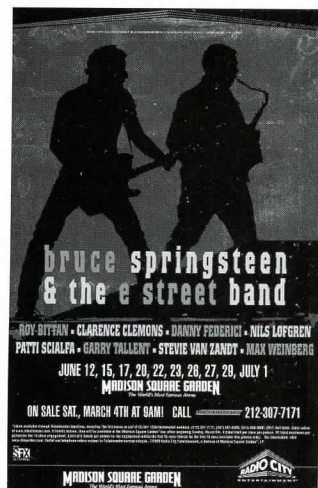
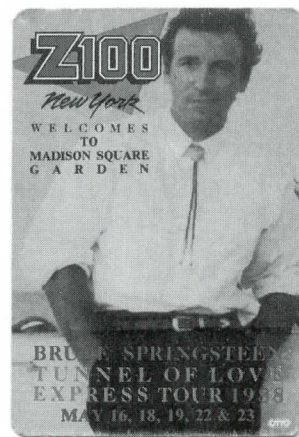
June 15 through July 1, 2000. As was by now customary with any New York area ticket sale, there was a general state of panic among Springsteen fans, not helped by the postponement of the original on-sale date. For the first time, the ticket limit was set up to facilitate fans seeing all of the shows. It was possible for one person to purchase two seats to each of the ten shows—a far cry from the 1988 situation that limited purchases to a total of four tickets to the five shows.

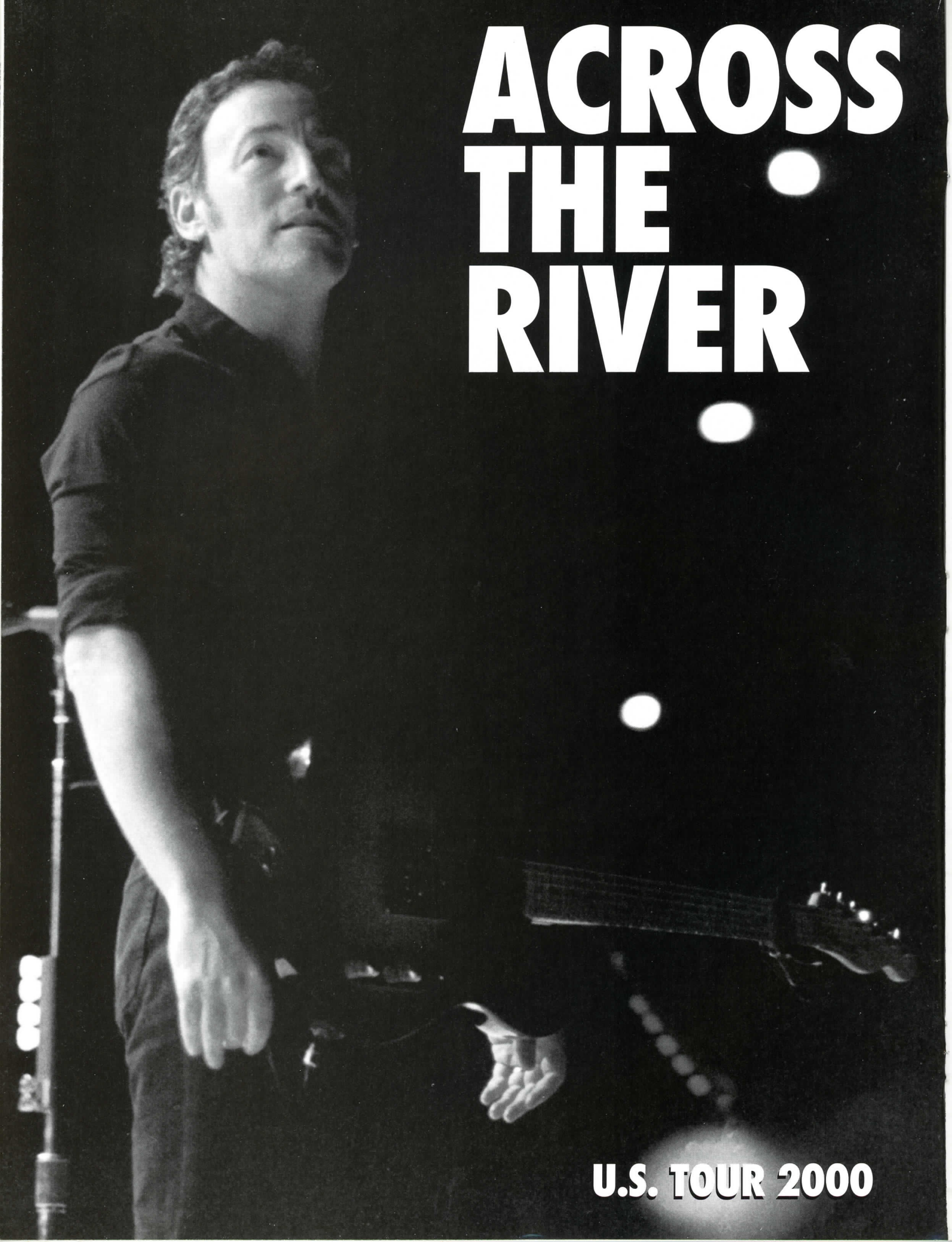
The 1999-2000 tour was full of surprises. Over 100 different songs found their way into the show before it was all over. New material was even being added to the set at the final show of the tour. There were also brand new unrecorded songs. But the big story that came out of the 2000 Madison Square Garden shows was the result of one new song in particular, "American Skin (41 Shots)." Suddenly Bruce's Madison Square Garden appearance was the lead story on every newscast. Nearly lost in the overreaction to "American Skin (41 Shots)" was the fact that it was just one of four brand new songs being played at the Garden shows. "Code of Silence," "Another Thin Line," and "Further on up the Road," however, generated no controversy.

These shows found Bruce making an all-out effort to make each show very different. Now that he had finally made it easier for the serious fan to obtain tickets to each show, Bruce also seemed to be acknowledging that many people were attending all ten shows of the stand. Over the ten nights there were 73 different songs played; the 15-night Meadowlands run in 1999 had 67 different songs, which seemed impressive enough until the Garden shows. In addition to the treat of hearing newly written material, the Madison Square Garden audience got some true rarities. On June 17, "The E Street Shuffle" was played in a version faithful to the studio recording. A slow, almost spoken version of the song had been played throughout 1975, but the last known performance of the fast version dated back to early 1974. Another big surprise came on July 1, when "Lost in the Flood" was played for the first time in 22 years. "Blood Brothers" was also performed as the closing song that night for the only time on the tour. Other rarely played songs that were performed at the Garden included "Secret Garden," "Mary Queen Of Arkansas," "The Promise," "It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City," "New York City Serenade," "Human Touch," and "Incident on 57th Street." The feeling at these shows was that any song in the entire Springsteen catalog could be played at any time.

The variety of the material may have been influenced by the fact that the shows were being recorded. (In fact, Bruce asked the audience to be quiet a few times, explaining that they were "doing some recording.") Perhaps Bruce saw this as his chance to get an E Street Band recording of "Roll of the Dice" and "Human Touch." Or maybe he wanted to record an updated version of "Lost in the Flood" or "New York City Serenade." Only he knows, of course, but the speculation will continue until something is released. High definition video recordings were made, so there is rampant speculation that a DVD release is in Springsteen's future. It would be a fitting document of the 1999-2000 tour, and a notable addition to the list of recordings made at the world's most famous arena.

ROBERT S. BADER regrettably admits that at the time of Bruce's Chicago dates at the Garden, he had recently purchased a copy of Chicago V and was unaware of the existence of Greetings From Asbury Park, N.J. Apart from those shows, the author has a perfect MSG attendance record.



A black and white photograph of a man, likely a musician, standing on a stage. He is wearing a dark, short-sleeved shirt and dark pants. He is looking upwards and to the right. He is holding a guitar, which is visible in the lower right portion of the frame. The background is dark, with several bright, out-of-focus light sources, possibly stage lights, visible. The overall mood is dramatic and artistic.

ACROSS THE RIVER

U.S. TOUR 2000

ARROWHEAD POND ANAHEIM, CA 2 NIGHTS

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5/21 SOUNDHECK: Includes "Don't Look Back," "Human Touch," "Viva Las Vegas," "Roulette," and "Dancing in the Dark."

5/21 SETLIST: Don't Look Back/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Human Touch/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/This Hard Land/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

5/21 NOTES: A return to California brings back "This Hard Land," last played 10/21/99 in Los Angeles. "Human Touch" is performed for the third time ever with the E Street Band. "Tenth Avenue" includes "My Girl." As with all performances since Barcelona, "Born in the U.S.A." is performed in its solo-acoustic blues version. The show's "meeting in the town tonight" gospel intro is dropped.

PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN HITS THE REPLAY BUTTON." Robert Hilburn in the *Los Angeles Times*: "...The only thing missing from the party was a new song. 'Don't Look Back,' Springsteen may have advised in the title of the opening song, but he didn't look forward much himself in the show.... Even though the tour expresses Springsteen's themes well, he has the kind of audience that doesn't just want to see him once during a tour, but as many times as possible. So the chances are that a hefty percentage of the audience Sunday also saw one or more of the Staples shows—and he's taught them to expect something extra. For them and for the other fans who sign on to Web sites after each show to learn the set list, Springsteen could have given the show—and this leg of the tour—an extra jolt by previewing at least one new song that he hasn't been playing on tour for several months now...."

WHERE YA GOIN': A shorter set, with no real surprises from the band after a couple weeks off. Bruce does make reference to Orange County during the "Light of Day" ministry of rock 'n' roll bit, adding "Disney-ized" and republican-ized." Also, "Ramrod" finds Steve asking Bruce, "Hey boss! Where ya goin'?" Bruce replies, "I'm going to Disneyland!"

—George A. Paul

MAY 22 ANAHEIM / NIGHT 2

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5/22 SETLIST: Take 'Em as They Come/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Darlington County/Rendezvous/Factory/Independence Day/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Roll of the Dice/No Surrender/Racing in the Street/Light of Day/Stand on It/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Gloria/Ramrod

5/22 NOTES: Eleven changes from the night before, including the Vegas-prep tour premiere of "Roll of the Dice," and the only performance on the tour of "Gloria." As with all performances in 2000, "No Surrender" is performed in a full-band acoustic country arrangement. "Light of Day" includes "California Sun." "Roulette," "Atlantic City," and "You Can

VIVA! VIVA! SPRINGSTEEN AND HIS SPANGLED CAPE, MAY 27, 2000.



KURT O'NEILL PHOTO

Look" are on the setlist but not played; several audibles include "Rendezvous," "Stand on It" and "Gloria."

POWER AND LIGHT: If they could do it, I'm sure Southern California Edison would find a way to tap into the electricity boiling out of the crowd in the first few bars of the inspired "Take 'Em As They Come" that kicked off the final West Coast appearance of the E Street Band. In a matter of seconds, I felt more excitement and energy than I'd encountered over three nights in Oakland last October.

As much as I felt "Roll of the Dice" to be a throw-away song in '92, this year's version served as living proof of the song's power when placed in the right hands. Clarence's searing solo claimed the song as E Street turf once and for all. Figuring that "Ramrod" would end the show, it was a pleasant surprise to have Bruce kick off the song with a few bars of "Gloria"—it was even more fun to have the band launch into a full cover version of the song. And when it came time to finally bid the West Coast farewell, "Ramrod" was a great way to go. —Ted Benson

NOW WHERE YA GOIN': The tour premiere of "Roll of the Dice" was a real highlight. Someone threw a set of dice on the stage that hit Bruce and Steve in the legs. When the song ended, Bruce rubbed them for good luck and rolled them across the stage, kicking them with his foot when the desired result didn't come up. During the closing Ramrod, Bruce once again kept yelling "I'm going... I'm going..." Finally, Steven asked, "Where are you going?" This time Bruce replied, "I'm going to Knott's Berry Farm!" Best of all, he closed by yelling, "We'll be seeing you again!" —Mike Novak

MGM GRAND GARDEN LAS VEGAS, NV MAY 27

SOUNDHECK: Includes "All or Nothin' at All."
SETLIST: Viva Las Vegas/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Be True/Darlington County/Atlantic City/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Roll of

the Dice/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Can't Help Falling in Love/Backstreets/Light of Day/Lucky Town/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod/Viva Las Vegas

NOTES: The only appearances on the tour of "Viva Las Vegas" (twice), "Can't Help Falling in Love," and a silver sequined cape. A host of other Vegas specials includes "Roll of the Dice," with fuzzy dice again thrown onstage; Bruce reportedly rolls a hard four. Also, the first "Be True" of 2000.

PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN DELIVERS TO ALL PARTISANS IN LAS VEGAS." Doug Elfman in the *Review-Journal*: Bruce Springsteen made so many Las Vegas references Saturday night it seemed as if he was trying to make up for never performing here before. He walked onstage in a shiny silver cape emblazoned with "Viva Las Vegas." Then he and the E Street Band played "Viva Las Vegas." And three hours later at MGM's Grand Garden Arena, they played "Viva Las Vegas" again for a final encore, even though Springsteen had already exited to the announcement, "The Boss has left the building." All night, Springsteen egged on the crowd: "Should we raise the stakes?" "C'mon, seven." "Luck be my lady tonight." "Are you ready to rumble?" "I'm going to see Siegfried and Roy..."

HIGH ROLLERS: You could feel it in the air. Everyone knew this show was going to be unique, and those thoughts were confirmed when the stage lights came up and Bruce, with his back to the audience donning a sequined cape, strummed the opening chords to "Viva Las Vegas." That song was almost like the National Anthem as everyone in the crowd chanted and thrust their arms toward the Grand Garden Arena ceiling.

And the Vegas-related rarities continued with "Atlantic City" (the best version I have ever heard of

TOUR REPORT COMPILED BY CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

10/13
 Transformation - buy a
 18 man room
 resume/cio - on
 chair - a 50
 their money back

High
 Blackjack Tables
 Roulé No-Despair
 Dice -
 STB
 Wayne Newton ~~is~~ 1212
 Desert Sands
 you can get out

"LAWST—AT THE BLACKJACK TABLES!" SPRINGSTEEN'S LAS VEGAS CRIB SHEETS, FOR "TENTH AVENUE FREEZE-OUT" (L) AND "LIGHT OF DAY" (R).

that song), "Roll of the Dice," "Can't Help Falling in Love" (a simple, solo arrangement), and "Lucky Town," which sounds incredible with the E Street Band. As an unexpected encore, Bruce called out for "Viva Las Vegas" one more time as the band took its bows following "Ramrod." When you thought the energy level couldn't get any higher, this last song put everyone over the edge. —Scott J. Neal

DELTA CENTER SALT LAKE CITY, UT MAY 29

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "American Skin" and "Saint in the City."
SETLIST: Don't Look Back/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Candy's Room/It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: For Salt Lake City, home of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the tour debut of "It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City." In the crowd: the Utah Jazz's Jeff Hornacek.

FROM SIN CITY TO THE SAINTS: "On a rattlesnake speedway in the Utah desert..." With that opening line to "The Promised Land," his fifth song of the night, the crowd at the Delta Center roared its personal welcome to Bruce and the Band as they made his first-ever stop in Salt Lake City together. Tonight's tour debut, "It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City," surprised just about everyone. He massaged the opening bars, and guided the band into the tune. The true fans in the audience were definitely caught off guard. Many Salt Lake references were made throughout the show. During "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," Bruce introduced Clarence as a "one-man Mormon Tabernacle Choir," and in Ramrod he preached that he was going to the "Big Church in the sky."

—Scott J. Neal

PHILIPS ARENA ATLANTA, GA 2 NIGHTS

JUNE 3 ATLANTA / NIGHT 1

6/3 SOUNDCHECK: American Skin, Further On Up the Road
6/3 SETLIST: Don't Look Back/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Be True/Human Touch/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Dead Man Walkin'/Backstreets/Light of Day//Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/3 NOTES: Rather than, "And kid, you better get the picture," in his "Tenth Avenue" vocal spotlight, Clarence makes a *Gone With the Wind* reference: "Frankly, Bruce, I don't give a damn!" In the crowd: Bobby Bonilla, Jeff Foxworthy, WCW professional wrestling personalities Diamond Dallas Page and Kimberly Page.

THE E STREET TOUCH: Though some complained about the sound, behind the stage it was among the best I had heard all year. "Human Touch" rocked like it never had in its previous incarnations, and "Dead Man Walkin'" and "Be True" (played by request) were nice surprises. —Kevin Compton

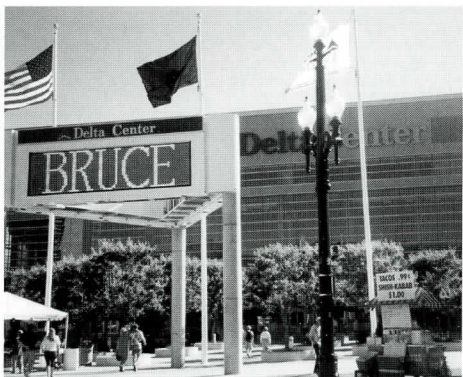
JUNE 4 ATLANTA / NIGHT 2

6/4 SETLIST: Further On Up the Road/The Ties That Bind/Two Hearts/Darlington County/Trapped/Point Blank/American Skin/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Loose Ends/No Surrender/Born in the U.S.A./Jungleland/Light of Day//This Hard Land/Hungry Heart/Born to Run//Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

6/4 NOTES: The last show before Madison Square Garden. An outstanding show in its own right, and, with two world premieres, seemingly a dress rehearsal for the final stand. The debut of "Further On Up the Road" opens the show, and a second world premiere, "American Skin (41 Shots)" is played in the seventh slot. The latter appears on the setlist as "41 Shots," while Bruce introduces it as "American Skin." In the crowd: Don Sutton, WCW professional wrestlers Scott Steiner and Jeff Jarret.

FROM THE HEART: From the beginning notes of the show you could tell that this would be a special one. Some of us recognized "Further on Up the Road" from having heard it at soundchecks and had people asking us what the song was. "American Skin (41 Shots)" was a very emotional moment. It was obvious that Bruce had a statement that came not

SCOTT J. NEAL PHOTO



WE'LL SEE YOU IN NEW YORK CITY.
JUNE 4, 2000.



only from the heart, but that he had put a great deal of thought into the story he was telling. I was very impressed with the audience, as they seemed both knowledgeable and willing to do their part. A great show. —Eric Coulson

GONE WITH THE WIND: A guy in the fourth row was holding up a sign that said "Loose Ends"—he almost had a heart attack when they played it. At the end of "Ramrod," Bruce repeated "I'm gone!" about five times—Steve asked where he's going, and Bruce said, "I'm gone with the wind!" —Chad Silver

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN NEW YORK, NY 10 NIGHTS

**JUNE 12
NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 1**

6/10 REHEARSAL: Two days before opening night, Bruce and the band rehearse at the same theater in Ft. Monmouth, NJ, that they occupied before leaving for Europe to begin the tour. Songs rehearsed include "American Skin," "Further On Up the Road," "Code of Silence," and most interestingly, "Wages of Sin," perhaps an alternate choice for night one's opening statement.

6/12 SETLIST: Code of Silence/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Be True/Point Blank/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Roll of the Dice/Dancing in the Dark/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Further On Up the Road/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/12 NOTES: The world premiere of "Code of Silence" opens the stand, Springsteen's first public "comment" since the "American Skin" media frenzy. VH1's "The Daily One" reports that Springsteen gave "Code of Silence" to the band within days of the NYC opener, though he wrote it almost 2 years ago. "American Skin" has its first NYC airing, too, with no spoken introduction. In the crowd: Kadiatou

and Saikou Diallo, the parents of Amadou, who met with Springsteen and expressed their appreciation.

PRESS: "BORN TO RUN, OR AT LEAST TO BE REDEEMED." Jon Pareles in the *New York Times*: "...American Skin" itself, which Mr. Springsteen performed in his first of ten sold-out shows at Madison Square Garden, is no anti-cop diatribe. With piano chords tolling behind Mr. Springsteen's care-worn voice, it's a resonant elegy and a reflection on how fear can become deadly....

Mr. Springsteen has made no statement beyond the song itself. But on Monday night, he opened his three-hour set with a new rocker, "Code of Silence," that he wrote with Joe Grushecky, a kindred songwriter. It could be about a couple that has stopped speaking—he calls someone "darling" and "baby"—or about a broken public trust. He also placed "American Skin" between "Point Blank" and "The Promised Land"....

Mr. Springsteen has been touring with [the E Street Band] for a year, and they have reached a new

Furber on 6/14/00
 Piers... Bird
 20's
 Arthur's Girl
 Dark on Camp
 Point Blank
 41 shots
 Youngstown
 Murder
 Bad
 Out
 on

Roll... Dief.
 where Baltha
 NO Summer
 USA
 Sugarland
 Cigars
 Hard Candy
 Born x Run
 J.K.L.
 Fall
 Card...
 Ramrod



ROBERT BADEN PHOTO

MEET ME OUT IN THE STREET—
AND BRING ANOTHER MIC!
JULY 1, 2000.



peak as an ensemble: gleaming with the keyboards of Roy Bittan and Danny Federici, surging with the bass lines of Garry W. Tallent and the drumming of Max Weinberg, honking with rhythm-and-blues from Clarence Clemons's saxophone and unleashing three lead guitarists—Mr. Springsteen, Steve Van Zandt and Nils Lofgren.... Patti Scialfa strums acoustic guitar and sings backup. The band vamps like a soul revue, then hits like a stainless-steel fist....

POWER TO THE PEOPLE: Well, there you have it: proof positive that you don't piss off Bruce Springsteen. I've seen about 25 to 30 shows over the past 15 years, and I think this might have been the best. "Code of Silence" to open was furiously brilliant, and the band nailed it. From then on, the first third of the show was fueled by a rage and intensity that I don't think I've ever seen Springsteen hit.

"American Skin" was terrifying. Following it with "The Promised Land" infused that song with incredible new life. Further, considering the context of the show, it became apparent how many songs have images of guns and murder. On that note, "Murder Incorporated" was damn impressive, too.

The rarities were neat, including Bruce stopping the band because they fucked up the opening of "Roll of the Dice," and a great country swing version of "Dancing in the Dark." But "Further On Up the Road" fell short—I don't think the band has it yet.

Finally, the crowd was a pleasure. The crowds have pretty much ruined the three previous shows I've seen for me because the majority doesn't seem to get what Bruce is about right now. This crowd seemed to get it, and the mutual respect back and forth made for a very, very strong show. Overall, a performance that showcased a broader range of emotion than in any other concert I've seen. He seemed passionate, and when he'd exorcised the demons, he seemed in a great, great mood that was infectious and invigorating. —David Billotti

JUNE 15 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 2



6/15 SETLIST: Further On Up the Road/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Darlington County/Trapped/My Hometown/American Skin (41 Shots)/Code of Silence/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/No Surrender/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day/Stand on It/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/This Hard Land/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/15 NOTES: All three new songs return, with "American Skin" immediately followed by "Code of Silence" for the only time. In the crowd: Winona Ryder.

HOW ABOUT A BRIS? NO?: Bruce was in a much "better" mood than last night, coming out smiling. Every song was hard-driving and played to its maximum—the new songs sounded great, and "Trapped" in particular was incredible and tight. During the ministry section, Bruce added a "rock 'n' roll bar mitzvah!" to the list. Like the first night, he talked about the New Jersey Devils winning the Stanley Cup and the Statue of Liberty officially being in New Jersey, while dancing his jig; tonight he added that since the New York Giants play in Jersey, they should change the name. Bruce said, "Then we'd be talking about controversy!" —Emmett Williams

JUNE 17 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 3

6/17 SOUNDCHECK: More material co-written with Joe Grushecky, including "Another Thin Line" and "I'm Not Sleeping," plus "The E Street Shuffle" and "Incident on 57th Street."



6/17 SETLIST: Code of Silence/The Ties That Bind/Two Hearts/Rendezvous/Atlantic City/The River/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/The E Street Shuffle/Born in the U.S.A./Racing in the Street/Light of Day/Further On Up the Road/Ramrod/Spirit in the Night/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/17 NOTES: The tour premiere of "The E Street Shuffle," last played in Boston, 12/2/75. In the crowd: *Sopranos* cast members, Billy Joel, Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins. "Spirit" is an audible; "Incident" on the setlist but not played. Drum tech Harry McCarthy briefly fills in for Max.

AMBULATORY MAX: Tonight Bruce calls Max to come down and do the pelvis grind, also calling for "Harry." There was a pause in the action while Max's replacement went up and took his position on Max's kit. Bruce says, "There's always a first. He's got legs!"

After "Tenth Avenue," Bruce said, "This is a song we never played before in our long and illustrious career. We're sure gonna play it now. All right, boys...." What he played was great, though definitely a song the E Streeters have played before: "The E Street Shuffle." Bruce sang, "Saturday night" instead of "Friday night." As usual when he breaks out an old song he hasn't played in a while, his eyes were glued to the TelePrompTer. A lovely new sax solo toward the end, and then Bruce shouted, "Come on, Roy," and Roy got a very nice solo as well. After another of their now-patented ten-second reprises wrapped it up, Steven clutched his heart in a mock heart attack.

Bruce seemed to be calling an audible as the bend held the end of "Ramrod." It seemed Bruce went to the mic before all of the band knew what they were playing next. But soon everyone knew, as Bruce

asked, "Can you feel the spirit? Can you feel the spirit now?" And we got "Spirit in the Night," a stellar version of this song. —Steven Svoboda

JUNE 20 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 4



6/20 SETLIST: Code of Silence/Take 'Em As They Come/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Candy's Room/Independence Day/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City/The Ghost of Tom Joad/New York City Serenade/Light of Day/Further On Up the Road/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Growin' Up/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/20 NOTES: Oldies night: "Saint in the City," "NYC Serenade," and "Growin' Up" in one show. Fiddler Soozie Tyrell guests on "The Ghost of Tom Joad." In the crowd: Mike Appel.

FIDDLING AROUND: "Code of Silence" is an interesting way to open a show. An all-rocker that stylistically struggles to fit in with any Springsteen era... other than now. That stop/start song progression tests and exemplifies the band's talents. Right into "Take 'Em As They Come," clearly an audible, setting the tone for yet another amazing show. "The Ghost of Tom Joad" is much improved with a sweet violin in this arrangement of the song, and Soozie Tyrell's presence was not only noted, but applauded. It seemed the words, "Wherever there's a cop beatin' a guy..." hung in the air a little longer than usual. The melodic and beautiful "NYC Serenade" was less of a "shocker" than it was back in Boston on 8/27/99, but much more meaningful. A real treat. —Peter Church

JUNE 22 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 5



6/22 SETLIST: Another Thin Line/Don't Look Back/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Something in the Night/My Hometown/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Sherry Darling/Secret Garden/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Backstreets/Light of Day/Further On Up the Road/Ramrod/Born to Run/Incident on 57th Street/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/22 NOTES: "Code of Silence" drops out of the set for the first time at the Garden, but it's replaced by another Springsteen/Grushecky composition: the world premiere of "Another Thin Line." The tour debut of "Secret Garden." Tyrell guests again, this time on two songs, "Youngstown" and "Tom Joad." Max's daughter plays keyboards on "Ramrod."

INCIDENT ON SEVENTH AVENUE: After "Tenth Avenue," Bruce says, "This is the first few days of summer. Are we ready? Come on, Max!" And into "Sherry Darling." That was fun, with a nice little kickdance at the beginning. Then we hear some nice slow chords. I'm thinking, "Back in Your Arms"? Not quite, but it's the rarely performed "Secret Garden." It's always a thrill to hear something for the first time in your life. But I have to say the song was somewhat less than thrilling. I'm not crazy about the arrangement; it didn't work that well for me. For "The Ghost of Tom Joad," Soozie was back again to great effect on violin with the same arrangement as two days ago: The band still comes in on the second verse, but with the violin sharing the spotlight, they are so understated that you almost don't notice.

In tonight's "lost in envy" New York/New Jersey



LET ME SEE YOUR HANDS!
JULY 1, 2000.

ROSIE L. DARLING PHOTO

rant, he added: "Lost in the words of the theme song, 'New York, New York'—which, come to think of it, is actually sung by a man from New Jersey!"

At the beginning of the second encore, Steve is holding up his red cup of water and toasting the audience. Bruce says, "Something special for the New Yorkers out there." Just when it was getting safe to mail in the songlist for the second encore, we get "Incident on 57th Street." This song feels much more current as Bruce and the band play it than some of his other earlier material. The feelings in the song seem to translate really well, 27 years later. The wall of sound as Bruce sings the closing lines of the song is great to hear. Everyone is contributing. Lovely ending to a lovely song. —Steven Svoboda

HOLD ON, I'M COMING: At the end "Ramrod" came one of the funniest things I've seen happen on their stage. Bruce ended the song, and was walking around the stage strumming the guitar, and when he ran back to the mic and yelled "1-2-3-4!" the most awkward-sounding noise came from the band. Something was definitely wrong. It turned out that it had been a "false ending," and that he had jumped right back into "Ramrod," while the band was playing "Born to Run"! After a few seconds, Bruce laughed into the mic, "Wait a minute, boys! I'm not done with Ramrod yet!" Then he counted off again, laughing, and they got it right. What a riot! When he stopped laughing and really counted off for "Born to Run,"

LATE BLOOMERS

Tour debuts on the final leg:

MAY 22: Roll of the Dice, Gloria

MAY 27: Viva Las Vegas, Can't Help Falling in Love

MAY 29: It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City

JUNE 4: Further On Up the Road, American Skin (41 Shots)

JUNE 12: Code of Silence

JUNE 17: The E Street Shuffle

JUNE 22: Another Thin Line, Secret Garden

JULY 1: Lost in the Flood, Blood Brothers



GARDEN VARIETY RARITIES

Four new songs appeared regularly at the Garden—two of them debuted there, and another, "American Skin," was played at all ten shows. But each night also brought its own treasure trove of older rarities.

NIGHT 1: Be True, Roll of the Dice, Dancing in the Dark

NIGHT 2: Trapped, No Surrender, Stand on It, This Hard Land

NIGHT 3: Rendezvous, Atlantic City, The E Street Shuffle, Racing in the Street, Spirit in the Night

NIGHT 4: Take 'Em As They Come, Candy's Room, It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City, New York City Serenade, Growin' Up

NIGHT 5: Don't Look Back, Something in the Night, Sherry Darling, Secret Garden, Incident on 57th Street

NIGHT 6: Does This Bus Stop, Human Touch, Dead Man Walkin', Sandy

NIGHT 7: For You, Downbound Train, She's the One, Racing in the Street, Night

NIGHT 8: Adam Raised a Cain, Trapped, Loose Ends, Back in Your Arms, Mary Queen of Arkansas, Blinded By the Light

NIGHT 9: Don't Look Back, The Promise, This Hard Land, Growin' Up

NIGHT 10: My Love Will Not Let You Down, Atlantic City, The E Street Shuffle, Lost in the Flood, The Promise, Blood Brothers

something was still off—they must have been "dis-comboobulated." But second encore's opener made thousands of dreams come true, as the first notes of "Incident" wafted through the arena. Holy cow, what a treat, and worth the wait. —Sharon LaVoy

JUNE 23 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 6



6/23 SETLIST: Code of Silence/The Ties That Bind/Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Point Blank/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Human Touch/Dead Man Walkin'/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day//Hungry Heart/Born to Run//Fourth of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/23 NOTES: "Light of Day" includes "Boom Boom." The first show without "Further On Up the Road" since its debut. In the crowd: Ed Norton, Salma Hayek

GET ON THE BUS: Needless to say, "Does This Bus Stop" took everyone by surprise. The crowd was actually very quiet when the band went into the song—maybe suspecting another new one—but as soon as Bruce boomed, "Hey, bus driver..." the place went nuts. The band nailed the ultra-rarity, and it was obvious that they enjoyed the hell out of it, Bruce smiling over to Steve throughout. "Human Touch" was a nice surprise, though not really the rarity I was hoping for. "Jungleland" coupled with "Meeting" just does not get old—the last verse of "Jungleland" is still by far one of the most powerful of the show. Still some booing during "American Skin" but not as much as earlier in the stand. "Hungry Heart" was put on the shelf a while ago and should have been left there, but it was saved by a knock-out version of "Sandy." —Richard Fitzpatrick

HE'LL BUY YOU SOME SHOES, TOO: During "Fall Behind," Steve approached the mic for his second solo line at the end, and instead of "I'll wait for you," he sang, "I'd drive all night for you baby, and should I fall behind, wait for me." The whole group laughed and scolded him quietly, Bruce shaking his head as he kept playing. It's so touching to see them appreciate each others' contributions to this song: patting each other on the back after solos, Patti hugging Bruce from behind as he plays, arms around each other at the end, the non-singers all on Max's riser adding percussion together. —Sharon LaVoy

JUNE 26 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 7



6/26 SOUNDCHECK: Bruce sits alone at the piano for "Real World" and at least part of "The Promise." Bill-board reports that Jonathan Demme filmed a video for "American Skin (41 Shots)" during the soundcheck as well.

6/26 SETLIST: Another Thin Line/Prove It All Night/For You/Two Hearts/Downbound Train/Mansion on the Hill/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/She's the One/Born in the U.S.A./Racing in the Street/Light of Day//Further On Up the Road/Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Night/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/26 NOTES: The stage rush starts early, at "Tenth Avenue." "Light of Day" begins with some Ventures surf guitar, and includes a healthy dose of the Detroit Medley with "C.C. Rider" and "Jenny,

Jenny"—the combo known as "Jenny Take a Ride"—in the middle. The second performance of "Night" on this tour.

HITTING HIGH GEAR: After a two-day break for WWF wrestling to invade the Garden, the Boss shows that he remains the heavyweight champion of rock 'n' roll. The show kicks into high gear early, with "For You" and the rarely played "Downbound Train" as highlights early on. "She's the One" was the zenith for me. Just stunning, with Roy and Max playing brilliantly. At one point Bruce asked the crowd, "Is it hot enough for ya?" It's hard to imagine the band getting any more scorching. As good as they were in New Jersey a year ago, the band is significantly better now—every note played to perfection, and smiles all around. You get the feeling that from this point on, anything is possible. —Peter Abraham

THE DET MED: "Racing in the Street" was a revelation—the evocative majesty of the song, such ceaseless beauty; this was brilliance and desire and illumination—totally gut-wrenching. Another moment to savor was the inclusion of "C.C. Rider"/"Jenny Jenny" in "Light of Day," which helped rejuvenate this song for me. The inclusion of "Night" was another real treat. —Karl Birtistle

JUNE 27 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 8



6/27 SETLIST: Code of Silence/The Ties That Bind/Adam Raised a Cain/Two Hearts/Trapped/Factory/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Loose Ends/Back in Your Arms/Mary Queen of Arkansas/Backstreets/Light of Day//Hungry Heart/Born to Run//Blinded By the Light/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/27 NOTES: The first night of high definition video taping brings an expanded and more conspicuous camera crew (including a Steadicam operator), shooting the show and lending some terrific shots to the video screens. The cameras will be on hand for the remaining nights. During "American Skin," Bruce asks the crowd for quiet for the recording. "Light of Day" includes "Jenny Take a Ride." In the crowd: John Sayles.

RUSHING THE RIVER: The original set list was replaced minutes before the start. A crossed-out "Trapped" was nevertheless played instead of the added "Atlantic City," and the originally-listed "Blinded by the Light" was played instead of the added "Sandy." However, most of the additions did replace the original choices—"Loose Ends" was played instead of the originally listed "E Street Shuffle," "Back in Your Arms" instead of "No Surrender"/"The Ghost of Tom Joad" and "Mary Queen of Arkansas" instead of "Born in the U.S.A." "Hungry Heart" was an audible in place of "This Hard Land."

Thanks to lax security, the stage rush set a record by coming during "Out in the Street," prompting Bruce to joke during his "Tenth Avenue" rap, "I see you were anxious to get to the river tonight!" I didn't expect to particularly like "Mary Queen of Arkansas" if I ever heard it live, but Bruce's tender and hopeful vocals made it a highlight of the show. The great Garden crowd revved up by a terrific performance made for a rousing "Hungry Heart." —Dave Miller

SOME CROWN JEWELS: The setlist was full of surprises. Like many of the other Garden shows, this one really did bring out and polish some old gems in the Springsteen crown. We got three unreleased songs, two songs from *Tracks*, two from *Greetings*, pretty amazing: nothing from *Born in the U.S.A.*, but two songs from *Greetings* in one night! And the band played my two favorite *Tracks* songs: "Loose Ends"

and "Back in Your Arms." "Loose Ends" was amazing, played perfectly, and closer to the bootleg version from *The Ties That Bind* (more and louder guitars) than the released version from the box set. "Back in Your Arms" featured passionate singing from Bruce, as well as stellar solos from Danny and Clarence. But on this song—and really, the whole show—the backbone was Roy on the piano and Max on the drums. "Blinded by the Light" began with only Bruce, then the rest of the band joined in. Bruce certainly had fun playing this one—actually, he looked to be in great spirits all night. —Kevin Cherry

JUNE 29 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 9



6/29 SETLIST: Code of Silence/Don't Look Back/The Ties That Bind/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Mansion on the Hill/My Hometown/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Another Thin Line/The Promise/Jungleland/Light of Day//This Hard Land/Born to Run//Growin' Up/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

6/29 NOTES: Springsteen sits at the piano for "The Promise," played for only the second time on the tour proper. Audibles include "Growin' Up" and "This Hard Land," the latter played for "friends from overseas," specifically Italy and Spain. Surprisingly for the penultimate show, night nine is otherwise more notable for the energy than for the setlist. Roy and Danny take a turn downstage for the pelvic thrusts. "Light of Day" includes "Jenny Take a Ride." In the crowd: Joe Grushecky, Sting, Sheryl Crow, and a large sign noted by Bruce and the band: "Here sits a NYC Policeman who still loves Bruce."

SMILING FOR THE CAMERA: "Here's one for the aficionados." Words that you live for as a fan of Bruce Springsteen. The first notes of "The Promise" cascade over the crowd like a soft summer rain. A reverent silence over 20,000 souls on a beautiful summer night in New York City. Springsteen delivers a stunning solo performance of perhaps his most heartfelt and honest composition ever as the center-

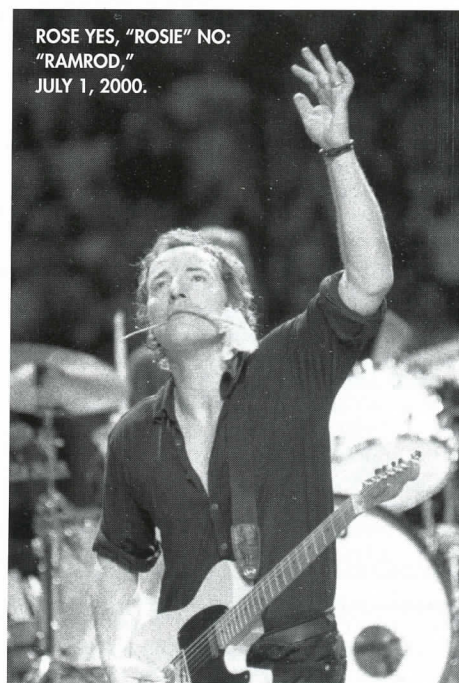
piece of a tremendous penultimate show of the Garden stand. From the stomping opening notes of the increasingly tight and sharp "Code of Silence," through the stunning centerpiece trio of "Another Thin Line," "The Promise" and "Jungleland," it was a heartfelt, concise, inspired set. Musically, they nailed everything. "Code of Silence" slammed with a machine-like precision. "American Skin" is such a powerful and breathtaking statement—the MP3s just can't do justice to this one. The partial Detroit Medley in "Light of Day" was a welcome respite.

The band was putting on the ritz big-time for Jonathan Demme's film crew. The camera angles on the video screens were the handiwork of a master filmmaker, completely different from the shots used throughout the tour. Cameras behind the band provided awesome fish-eye shots of Bruce working the crowd. Close-ups of hands became fascinating in their simplicity. The shots on the screen were so engaging, it was hard to keep your eyes on the stage. The film is going to be amazing. —Bert Haughin

TICKLING THE IVORIES: A strong and solid set, but without the abundance of rarities some of us were expecting. "My Hometown" (the only *BUSA* song played all night) was unexpected, and Bruce asked for quiet during the quiet songs because the show was being recorded. After "Another Thin Line," the lights went down and I thought I saw someone replacing the setlist on Roy's piano. When the lights came on, Bruce was sitting at the piano and my heart leapt in my mouth. This "The Promise" was an excellent one to boot, with a vocal delivery a little more like that of the '70s versions, and the NYC crowd responded to it with great enthusiasm. Most of the crowd did not know the song, but the fact that Bruce was playing this song alone at the piano must have made people realize that something special was happening. After the song ended, Bruce just sat there with this beaming grin on his face.

"This Hard Land" was great, and brought back memories of my first show back in '93, when this song was the highlight of the set for me. The next surprise was "Growin' Up" to open the second encore, a nice, boisterous, loud version, though the tone of the show was rather dark all along and very intense. All in all, a good strong performance, including enough setlist surprises to keep all but the most spoiled fans happy. —Magnus Lauglo

ROSE YES, "ROSIE" NO:
"RAMROD,"
JULY 1, 2000.



PAUL KAYTES PHOTO

JULY 1 NEW YORK CITY / NIGHT 10



7/1 SETLIST: Code of Silence/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Atlantic City/Mansion on the Hill/The River/American Skin (41 Shots)/The Promised Land/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/The E Street Shuffle/Lost in the Flood/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day//The Promise/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Further On Up the Road/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Blood Brothers

7/1 NOTES: The last show of the tour is the longest, at three-and-a-half hours and 28 songs. The drop line for tickets was also the longest of the ten nights, with tickets in high demand. Due to the late start, the show ends well after midnight. In the crowd: John Eddie, Mets pitcher Al Leiter, ESPN's Bob Ley, Kevin Bacon and Kyra Sedgwick. The tour debut of "Lost in the Flood," the song's first performance since Detroit, 9/1/78. Another tour premiere provides a fitting epilogue to the E Street reunion: "Blood Brothers," previously played only at the Sony Studios show on 4/5/95, includes a brand new verse especially for the occasion. During the nine-song encores, "Ramrod" finds Bruce with a rose in his mouth. As Bruce thanks the audiences around the world, the NYC audience return the thanks with a massive, moving "E Street Band!" chant. Bruce's last words: "We'll be seein' ya!"

PRESS: BRUCE BRINGS IT ON HOME." David Hinckley in the *Daily News*: Bruce Springsteen sang "The Promise," made a promise and kept a few promises Saturday night as he wrapped up his 15-month E Street Band reunion tour.... On a night when a spare ticket was harder to find than a John Rocker T-shirt and much of the crowd was figuratively clinging to Springsteen's ankles as he walked off the stage at 12:19 a.m., he left a strong hint his work isn't finished. "We hoped this tour would mark a renewal and rebirth of our band and our commitment to serve you," he said, "and we will continue to try and do so...." Springsteen sang repeatedly of brotherhood and community over the past 15 months. He sounded like a man more comfortable in his own American Skin—and that leaves the road wide open.

"THE PROMISE,"
JULY 1, 2000.



ROCCO COVIELLO PHOTO

STILL WON'T LET YOU DOWN: The climate was well set with the setlists from 6/27 and 6/29. In other words: the band is recording, you're gonna hear powerful performances of songs that have defined the tour. And to that end, we did. The fitting return of "My Love" was exceptional, with drawn-out guitar solos and all smiles by Bruce. I felt my first twinge of sadness when Bruce yelled out at the beginning of "Two Hearts," "C'mon Steve!... Once more!" As the band rolled through "Youngstown," "Murder Inc." and "Badlands," they picked up steam, power, and promise. And I wondered... will it ever be this good again? But as quickly as the thought came, I remembered: it's the promise of life *right now*. And they delivered. —Peter Church

THAT AIN'T "INCIDENT," MAN: After "Tenth Avenue," the stage went dark, and the diehards were left to wonder what song was coming up. The lights came on again, and Bruce was playfully strumming his guitar. "Are you ready to Shuffle?" he asked, and the crowd went crazy as he lead the band through a fun and breezy "E Street Shuffle." After that the stage went dark again, and after a few tantalizing moments, Roy broke the silence playing notes I had been hoping but never daring to believe I would ever hear. And no, it wasn't "Incident." I screamed out as soon as I recognized it, deafening my seatmates, and more gasps went up as more people realized what the band was playing: "Lost in the Flood." The version was unbelievably loud and powerful, with the same emotional force as "Backstreets." Maybe not that many people in the arena knew it, but the version was so powerful that I think even those unfamiliar with it realized this was something special. I had never expected to hear it after the whole "American Skin" controversy—after all, the song is about cops and gangs shooting at each other in New York. After the song finished, I was on a permanent high for the rest of the show. —Magnus Lauglo

FAMOUS LAST WORDS: For the encores, Springsteen came out alone, walked over to the piano and played "The Promise." I've always appreciated the song on some level, but could never muster the kind of enthusiasm most fans have for it. Now I get it. It was probably the most poignant moment I've ever seen at a concert. When the band came back to the stage, they were all applauding.

Before "Land of Hope and Dreams" he reiterated his opening night statement by saying that this represents a "rededication and re-commitment of the band." Great news for all of us. He then thanked his manager and his crew and finally the band, "the best band in the land." The crowd then started a spontaneous "E Street Band, E Street Band" chant, Bruce



THIS TIME IT'S FOR REAL?
JULY 1, 2000.

had to ask for "some damn lights" on the band, as the persistent chant continued and seemed to deeply touch everyone on stage.

Following "Land of Hope and Dreams," Bruce started into a slow, moody, version of "Blood Brothers." When he had Clarence, Garry, Nils, Steve, and Patti all join hands as he sang the final altered verse, I practically wept. It wasn't that long ago that I honestly thought I'd never see Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band again. Now here I was at Madison Square Garden on the final night of an outstanding tour watching this band, this rock 'n' roll treasure, sing:

Now I'm out here on this road
Alone on this road tonight
I close my eyes and feel so many friends around me
In the early evening light
And the miles we have come
And the battles won and lost
Are just so many roads traveled
So many rivers crossed
And I ask God for the strength
And faith in one another
'Cause it's a good night for a ride

'Cross the river to the other side
My blood brothers.

It sounds like we'll be hearing and seeing them again at some point. If we don't, somehow now it feels complete in some way. I thought there was a good chance this night would be what I expected, although I never thought it could be everything that I hoped. I have to stop doubting this man.

—Tom Pareti

CROSSING THE RIVER: The final song was the single greatest moment I've seen from Bruce in concert. As "Blood Brothers" began you could see emotions welling up in Bruce. I thought he was going to lose it, but instead he poured his feelings into his singing. Before Bruce sang the final new verse written for the occasion, he called and motioned for Patti, Steve, Garry, Nils and Clarence to come by him. They were slow to catch on at first. Patti slowly walked over and Bruce had to eventually call Clarence again to join the line. Then side by side, they joined hands and raised them out to their side as Bruce sang the final verse. A perfect and unforgettable ending to a triumphant tour that reached the river of life. —Dave Miller



SO MANY FRIENDS AROUND ME:
"BLOOD BROTHERS,"
JULY 1, 2000.

MAY				JUNE								JULY			
Anaheim 21 CA	Anaheim 22 CA	Las Vegas 27 NV	Salt Lake City 29 UT	Atlanta 3 GA	Atlanta 4 GA	New York City 12 NY	New York City 15 NY	New York City 17 NY	New York City 20 NY	New York City 22 NY	New York City 23 NY	New York City 26 NY	New York City 27 NY	New York City 29 NY	New York City 1 NY

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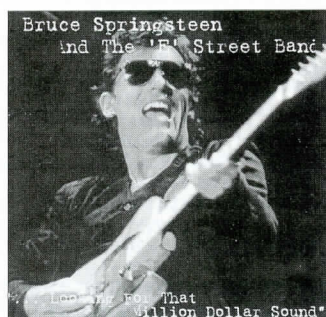
SUMMER 2000 **BACKSTREETS** PAGE 29

ON COLLECT ING

By Richard Breton
and Fred Mills

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* magazine provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnists solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real rip-offs—our advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance, and sound quality on a scale from one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found on legitimate releases.



•...Looking For That Million Dollar Sound
(BFD, 2CD-R)
Sound: 8
Performance: 8
Packaging: 6

As the *Darkness* tour yielded what are arguably the best-known and best Springsteen boots ever, eyebrows still raise when a previously unbooted '78 tape—a near-flawless audience one at that—surfaces on CD. The fact that this May 31 Boston Music Hall tape was pressed up not by one of the silver-disc standard-bearers like Crystal Cat or Scorpio but by CD-R upstart BFD is all the more cause for

head-scratching. It's a wonder this one was kept out of the hands of the big boys for this long; one collector observed, "Boston tapers have a history of killer Bruce recordings going back to 1974, and my hunch with BFD is that this is being put out by the folks who have the original master tapes."

With that in mind, *Million Dollar Sound* is clearly an auspicious debut for BFD. The sound quality for an audience recording of the *Darkness* era is remarkable—no crowd interference, negligible hiss and practically no tape saturation distortion, plus a stunning true-stereo dynamic presence, depth and clarity for instruments and vocals.

The show is a spirited one that's simultaneously loose in feel (owing, no doubt, to the tour having started barely a week earlier, on May 23 in Buffalo) yet performed with a we're-gonna-show-you determination. There are enough idiosyncrasies present in the set to make the show thoroughly enjoyable even to the most jaded collector. "She's the One" includes the "Mona" intro, but the "Not Fade Away" and "Gloria" parts had not yet appeared. "Adam Raised a Cain" has a completely different, slower blues tempo than in subsequent shows.

"Quarter to Three," which closes the show in high fashion, is performed for the first time on the tour. An absolutely wonderful version of "The Promise" is present, en route to its lengthy retirement in San Antonio six weeks later. And Springsteen doesn't submit much in the way of monologues, save a relatively brief one in the middle of "Growin' Up." (This shortens the overall length of the show—the discs run 71 and 74 minutes—although a very subtle tape edit seems to occur between "Growin' Up" and "Saint in the City," possibly to enable the show to fit onto two discs.)

Packaging-wise, the desktop design is definitely grassroots (medium-quality paper stock, one-sided color printing), but the appropriate photos are an attentive touch. And anyway, the title on this one isn't touting glossy CD booklets—looking for that million dollar sound? Scoop this set up and I'd reckon you've found it. —FM



•Catch That Train
(BFD, 3CD-R)
Sound: 7
Performance: 9
Packaging: 6

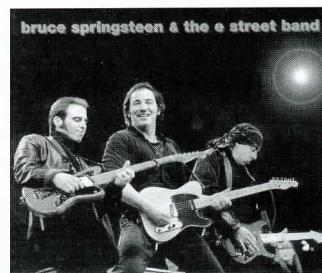
As with BFD's initial offering, this set presents a previously unbooted tape from Boston, packaged similarly and again offering impressive sound given the change in venue from a small theater to a huge arena. Packaging this clearly homegrown would normally score a lower rating, but BFD again gets points for attention to detail, with photos definitely shot early in the *River* tour, if not at the very show captured here.

Catch That Train documents the December 15, 1980, Boston Gardens show, about nine weeks into the tour. Compared to *Million Dollar Sound* it suffers somewhat from big-hall acoustics (less high-end clarity, more distant-sounding, etc.), not to mention substantially more hiss. Just the same, although a rather tone-deaf female is heard singing along enthusiastically at the beginning of "Thunder Road," audience noise is kept to a minimum. The stereo imaging is good, and there's not much in the way of boominess either, suggesting the tapers were well-positioned that night.

Setlist-wise, the show on *Catch That Train* finds Bruce experimenting more with the *River* material. "The Price You Pay" turns up, and "You Can Look" is in the first set; "Drive All Night" and "Jackson Cage" are dropped. A subtle touch of cinematic structuring arrives with "Racing in the Street" linked to "The River," Roy Bittan's piano lending a simple, elegant segue for the two reflective numbers. The second set kicks off with the patented crowd-pleasing "Cadillac Ranch," "Sherry Darling" and "Hungry Heart"; again, deep into the set, Bruce goes "dark" with back-to-back readings of "Stolen Car," "Wreck on the Highway,"

and "Point Blank." It's an extended meditation on physical and psychic mortality that adds another profoundly cinematic touch to the show. Unfortunately, the first two songs come at the end of disc two; as "Point Blank" wouldn't fit, you have to interrupt the trilogy to change discs. With the rest of disc three, the show turns toward the more partying matters at hand: "Ramrod," "Rosalita," "Santa Claus," and closing things down, of course, with "Detroit Medley."

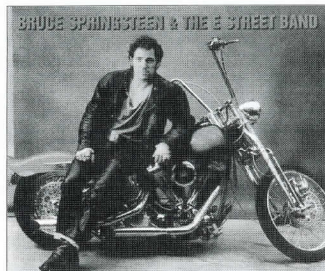
At this point on the *River* tour, Bruce kept his monologues to a minimum; the only one of note here prefaces "Independence Day." However, there's a funny spontaneous bit after "You Can Look" when Bruce admonishes the crowd not to toss glow-rings: "Hey, if any of you guys got those crazy green things, I dunno what the hell they're called—they things—I'd appreciate it if you could hold on to 'em tight all night long. Because when you throw 'em around, you're liable to hit somebody in the head..." Anybody who got conked on the noggin with flying gee-gaws at concerts in the '80s will no doubt get a smile at the recollection. *Backstreets* readers with long memories will too: the magazine was born just seven weeks prior to this show, at the 10/24/80 Seattle concert. —FM



•Olympic Stadium First Night
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)
224 minutes
Sound: 8
Performance: 8
Packaging: 8

•Olympic Stadium Second Night
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)
235 minutes
Sound: 9
Performance: 9
Packaging: 8

Beginning in late May and continuing on into June, the 1999 shows really started to jell into a cohesive showcase, with Bruce and the band as tight musi-



cally as they had ever been. Both these sets are taken from the two Stockholm shows on June 23 and 24. There were only a couple more shows for the European leg after Sweden, and the first U.S. leg wouldn't be starting for a few weeks after that. Knowing that some well deserved rest was just over the horizon must have fueled the performances.

These two shows represent variations of the two main setlists that cropped up: we'll call them "Model A" and "Model B." On June 23, Model A included "My Love Will Not Let You Down" as the first song followed by "Prove It All Night," and further down in the set were "Mansion on the Hill," "Where the Bands Are," and "Backstreets"; the June 24 Model B included the "I Wanna Be With You" opener along with "The Promised Land," and later "Factory," "Loose Ends," and "Jungleland." *Olympic Stadion First Night* has "Darkness on the Edge of Town" and "Born in the U.S.A.," while *Olympic Stadion Second Night* has the rarer "Trapped" and "Downbound Train." "Stand on It" was performed each night. The band members were still doing their bits in "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out" as Bruce was introducing them, and the version on June 24 that includes a good portion of "Fire" (from Garry's bass introduction) is one of the best. "Bobby Jean" from the same night sounds like the best live version from the whole tour.

Both these sets are very well recorded audience tapes with minimal crowd noise, but the edge goes to *Second Night* for cleaner sound and better performance overall. This is not a slight against *First Night*, which is a worthy set all the same. It's just that it has to suffer comparisons to *Second Night*—not unlike the simultaneous release of *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town*.

The bonus tracks tacked onto each set separate them even fur-

ther. *First Night* contains mostly pre-tour bonus tracks taken from television broadcasts in the U.S.A. and Europe. *Second Night* continues this somewhat with Bruce's taped TV performance of Johnny Cash's "Give My Love to Rose." But the rest of *Second Night*'s bonus tracks are rare and one-off performances from Europe 1999—"Dollhouse," "Car Wash," "I'm on Fire," "War" with Edwin Starr, "Lion's Den," "Who'll Stop the Rain," and more—and all sounding great.

Along with the typical quality Crystal Cat packaging and booklet with pictures from the show, it's hard to go wrong with either set. But while each *Olympic Stadion* set makes for a good representation of the European leg, *Second Night* represents one of the best shows of the tour. —RB



•**Boston Night**
(Crystal Cat, 2CD)
Sound: 8
Performance: 7
Packaging: 8

•**The Boston Tea Party**
(Piggham, 2CD-R)
155 minutes
Sound: 9
Performance: 7
Packaging: 6

After the 15-show stand at the Meadowlands, Bruce and the band hit Boston's Fleet Center for five nights; some of these ranked favorably with, or exceeded, the best Jersey shows. But not so fast—while the last two Boston concerts are generally considered the best of the five, these titles are both taken from the second show on August 22.

Highlights are the "Adam Raised a Cain" opener, as well as "Trapped," a great "Point Blank," "Loose Ends," and "Light of Day" including "Diddy Wah Diddy." Both "The Promised Land" and "Prove It All Night" were included early in the show—a fairly rare occurrence. While a good

show, it's the sound rather than performance that inspired these multiple releases.

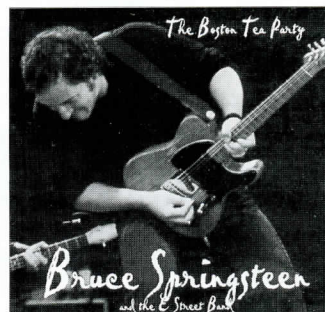
This concert is one of the most booted of the entire tour, with numerous versions of this particular show on CD or CD-R. And all these releases can be traced back to a single source, so sound comparisons are easy. While this performance was good enough to release on its own merits, the main reason for the multiple issues is likely the recording, from the Assistive Listening Device (ALD) broadcast from within the arena.

An ALD recording in and of itself doesn't guarantee a good listen; the sound is often somewhat akin to a mono compressed radio broadcast of a dry soundboard. Some have a signal so weak that it's periodically interrupted by static or just plain cuts out. Some broadcast a narrow frequency range of music, with plenty of midrange and minimal bass or treble. The signal can be loud enough to cause some distortion, and the audience is usually distant in the recording.

The source tape for this show has evidence of all the foibles of an ALD recording, but thankfully it's kept to a minimum. There's some minor interference and distortion here and there—most notably in "Streets of Philadelphia" and "Backstreets"—and there's some major interference where the sound threatens to drop out altogether, as on "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out." On the original tape, the sound is pretty thin with no bass frequencies to speak of. But what's interesting in the case of *The Boston Tea Party* and *Boston Night* are the two entirely different processes and treatments of the source, representing what can be done with some extra effort and careful attention to the mastering process.

Crystal Cat's *Boston Night* is basically a remastering of the source tape, bringing out more from whatever bass frequencies were present as well as improving the dynamic range to good effect. They also attempted to minimize any interference problems as much as they could, but in some cases there just wasn't much that could be done. The audience is still nearly inaudible, heard only off in the distance in between songs, which unfortunately makes some songs—espe-

cially the sing-along portion of "Hungry Heart"—very strange to listen to. But even so, the end result is a nicely remastered version that's still a pleasure to hear.



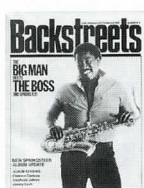
Piggham's version, *The Boston Tea Party*, takes a different approach. After some remastering to the original source tape, Piggham took an excellent audience tape of the same show, synchronized it with the ALD tape, and mixed them together in an attempt to capture the best of both worlds. And, by golly, it works! Not only do you get the benefit of the ALD's broadcast clarity, but you can hear the crowd doing the "blow away" parts during "The Promised Land," the mass-singing on the chorus to "Trapped," the call-and-response on "Out in the Street" and "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" and, of course, the sing-along during "Hungry Heart." In forming this hybrid, Piggham Records has created something closer in sound to an FM radio broadcast than a soundboard. And some of the frequencies missing on the ALD were present on the audience tape, giving the end result a fuller sound. It doesn't hurt that the audience tape was in stereo, giving the overall result a more natural sound.

The downside to Piggham's approach is two-fold: they didn't utilize more of the audience tape in the mix to cover up some of the deficiencies of the ALD, and some drawbacks of the audience tape (e.g. crowd talking between or during songs) are a distraction. But this is nit-picking; what they did is a masterstroke.

Some will want the cleaner and clearer sound of Crystal Cat's *Boston Night* which best represents the source tape—and either set is recommended—but to me *The Boston Tea Party* wins hands down over the more sterile Crystal Cat set. I'll have mine with audience, thank you very much. —RB



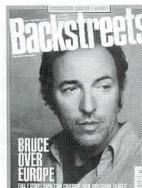
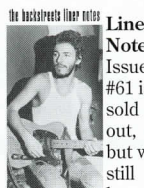
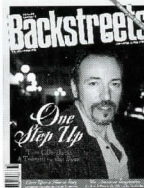
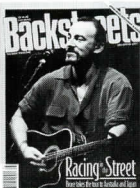
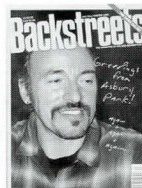
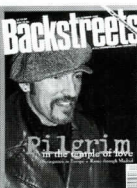
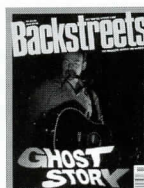
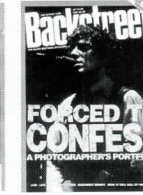
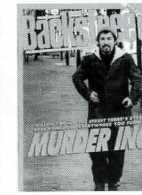
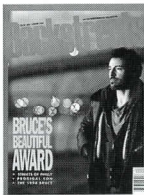
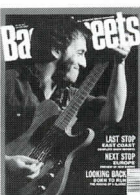
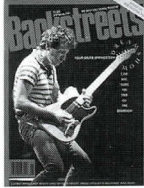
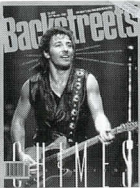
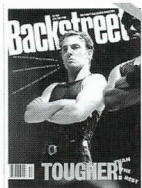
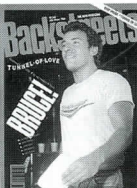
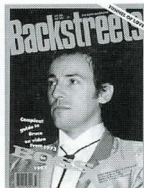
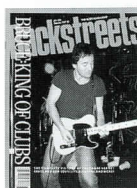
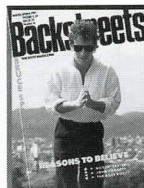
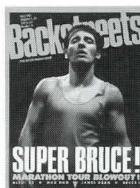
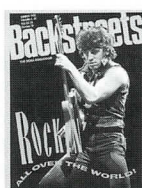
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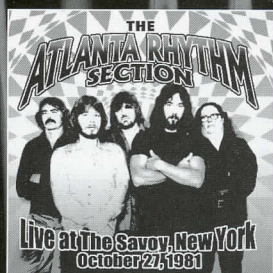
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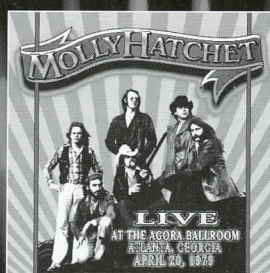
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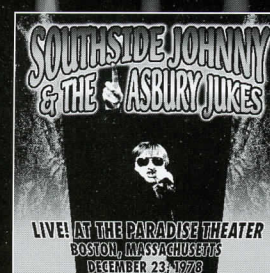
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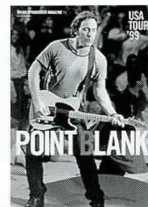
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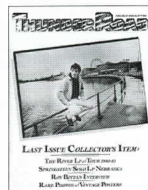
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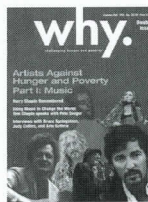
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